

Zhan Long

(斩龙)

Volume 04

The Chase To the Top

Shi Luo Ye

(失落叶)

Story Description:

Li Xiao Yao. Former S.W.A.T member, but retired into an ordinary security guard. While being sent to grab a ladder, he accidentally stumbled upon the VIP room instead of the storage room, and found a women in the middle of changing. As revenge, she brought him out in the middle of nowhere and kicked him off there. He spent hours walking back, only to find himself being kicked out due to lack of payment. As bad things pile one after another, his previous supervisor offers him a new job as the bodyguard for the daughter of the Tian Xin group CEO, both in reality, and in a virtual reality game -Hello

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 749: Deer Cry Cave

Deer Cry Cave, just east of the Shattered Bone Shrubbery and west of the Spirit Snake Swamp. It was actually a map that was right at the center of things. It was hidden within the Fierce Wind Forest maps and was discovered by Qing Qian and Wei Liang the two curious kids. Up to this point, nobody else has discovered it. Any officers that weren't on the top level like Star Blade and Tang Xing didn't even know about the map. All that they knew was that there was a high level map with a lot of resources.

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I urged my horse to the front of the platoon. I held the reigns in my right hand and my Zhen Yue Blade in my left. It almost looked as though I was a lefty. But, nobody was laughing. Because everyone knew that I was holding the Zhen Yue Blade, the number one godly weapon in Tian Ling City. Once this country weapon came out, even the Ghost Harvest weapon stats were crushed by its stats. Actually, my Dragon Reservoir was already one of the top Ghost Harvest Weapons, but its attack was only slightly stronger than half the Zhen Yue Blade's stats. They were on completely different levels.

Wang Jian lead his horse over to me and said, "Brother Xiao Yao, do you still remember [Epic]?"

I was stunned that he was bringing them up and nodded, "Yup, of course I remember. Palace Decree and Palace Spirit are both still there, aren't they? I've always been thinking about them. What's up, did something happen to [Epic]?"

Wang Jian replied, "Last time, when we were in Moon City, didn't we start an international war? [Epic] had also participated, but they had been completely crushed by [Casualty]. They had lost two thousand people without even getting the chance to fight back. It seems that [Epic] has some kind of an internal conflict going on. Seven of their officer level players are now accusing the guildmaster for being incapable due to that battle. Furthermore some people have been pointing out that he has the

bravery but not the brains and isn't fit to be the Guild Master. Looks like [Epic] will have someone fight for the guild Masters seat soon."

I stiffened and furrowed my brow, "Someone wants to take the Guild Master's position? But.... the Epic guild at most has only has a few thousand people. In reality it does not have that many resources either. Why would someone want to force him out of that position?"

Wang Jian grinned, "Brother Xiao Yao, your strength and Charisma are both top tier, so you can live your life carefree. Naturally you don't understand the struggle of plebeians. Nevermind a guild with several thousand people even a guild with several hundred people have seen many coup d'etats. Almost every Guild has this problem as for our Zhan Long.....You, Li Mu, Cang Tong, and Qing Qian hold down the fort. Anybody who has the notion to do so doesn't have the power to. [Epic] on the other hand was originally an alliance of three different guilds. Plus....."

"plus what?" I asked.

Wang Jian looked into the distance and smiled, "Plus I heard, Palace Decree's smithing skill has already reached level 14. As long as his materials are enough he will be able to create Divine tier weapons."

"Divine tier, damn!"

I was stunned, "You aren't joking right? S level 14 smith can create Divine tier weapons?"

"Yep." Wang Jian nodded, "That's right, however the material requirement is extremely difficult to procure, and so Mass Production doesn't seem very viable, rumor has it that Palace Spirit and Palace Decree are working together. To this day they were only able to create a level 15 Divine tier battle axe however Palace Decree's talent is incredible. That Divine tier battle-axe he created has an upper limit attack power of a whopping 5200."

I felt my heart skip a beat, "Looks like.....Apollo's siblings really have the power to change the flow of the game. What else?"

Wang Jian, "What else? Everything was downhill from there, the Epic

Guild Master wanted to use the power of the guild and acquire several mines after and that how's the crew was able to create various high-level equipment. He tried to have the guild cover some of that. At that point they began to recruit players and used those that had gold to continue creating better weapons and slowly bringing the Epic Guild further up into one of the top ten guilds in Tian Ling City.”

I nodded, “That isn't a bad plan.”

Wang Jian wryly smiled, “Unfortunately, the other factions within Epic are not willing to see Thousand Mile Ambition become greater and so they are petitioning to have him abdicate. On top of that they want to hold an election within the guild to find out who the next Guild Master will be. They say that it is for the sake of democracy that every guildmaster from then on will be picked through that method.”

I smiled, “That is all based off of your connections. Whoever has the most number of Brothers is the person with the most number of votes. It's actually a very ugly way of campaigning for votes. The real talented people don't necessarily get to become a Guild Master but rather the vile person with a lot of friends is able to take the seat. That kind of democracy is of no use.”

Wang Jian replied, “Brother, you are right. That is exactly what I was thinking as well. However.... we should not interfere with the internal affairs of another guild. After all the path that [Epic] takes can only be decided by themselves. Although, brother you can relax. Vice guildmaster Cang Tong has already contacted Palace Spirit. If Epic really ends up dividing, Palace Spirit will convince her brother to join Zhan Long with her. Her impression of Zhan Long is pretty good and she said that Zhan Long was filled with interesting people and a very handsome and approachable guildmaster.”

I rubbed my nose and felt a little embarrassed, “Am I really that approachable?”

Wang Jian, “At least you aren't like Q-Sword and Fang Ge Que who keep their associates at a distance.”

“All right then.....”

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Right at that moment we had reached the border of Broken Bones Shrubbery. This was an area that was controlled by [Legend] for training purposes. I could already see a group of Legend players killing monsters in the distance. Even though the level 1 Earth Bane Oxen now had a very low spawn rate, they were still trying to catch them. After all even a dry river had some fish. This was also understandable, as almost every map within Tian Ling City was the same way. [Zhan Long] controlled the Steel Blade Mountain, [Hero's Mound] controlled the Fire Crystal Basin, [Judgment] had a monopoly on the Frost battle Rams and there were many other examples as well. Everyone hoped that their mounts can become the most unique and strongest mounts in the server. As long as someone is strong enough then they will control the Monopoly on a certain resource.”

“Hi, Zhan Long!”

In the distance, a flag bearer player led his horse over. He raised his large halberd and waved at us. It was Little Scholar. That brat was now level 128. He smiled, “Where are you guys going?”

Li Mu immediately replied, “Nowhere, but wherever I go, I am completely fearless.....”

Wan Er grinned, “We are checking out all the different Maps. Little Scholar continue your training, we won't disturb [Legend]'s event any longer.”

Little Scholar gave a nod with a smile, “Ok, it's just a routine grinding event. So very boring. Go on ahead, I wish you good luck! Once the Heroes Wings International Tournament comes to an end I'm afraid that the balance of power in Destiny will have completely shifted.”

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and said, “No problem, as long as everybody works together then Tian Ling City will remain in the Chinese server. Maybe even Moon City and Port City will become Chinese territory!”

Little scholar laughed “Yep, I'm just afraid that somebody will try and

right things in the middle!”

The person he was talking about was none other than Rumor, Not Ordinary and the rest. Even so I wasn't worried. After all, they weren't planning on becoming a part of the main forces in the upcoming country battles, even though the greedy wolf Raiders now had 30,000 members I still felt that their battle capabilities aren't that strong. Once they meet the main guilds from Moon City and Flame Cloud City, they will definitely become divided immediately and crushed. The age of which the Greedy Wolf Raiders were undefeatable has already passed. They were only level 105 Emperor Tier Mounts, and were incomparable to the ones that [Zhan Long], [Legend], [Hero's Mound], and [Judgement] were in control of.

I grabbed my reins and said, “No problem, the sun will eventually rise isn't that right?”

Little scholar laughed, “That's true. Then I wish you a successful journey!”

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After we left the [Legend] territory we had a leisurely walk through the forest with my blade in hand. [Legend] was made on the blood and sweat of Fang Ge Que. The entire guild's personality was the same as its guildmaster. [Legend]'s prudent and cautious personality came from Fang Ge Que. Plus, [Legend] inherently carried a certain noble attitude. It's power was both incredibly strong and unpretentious. This was something that [Hero's Mound], [Vanguard], and [Prague] were incapable of. This was probably also due to the fact that [Legend] was always the creme of the crop in the Chinese Server, right?”

The thicket in the forest before me was getting thicker and thicker as we pushed forward. Qing Qian raised her dagger and dashed before me, “We're almost there. Three more minutes! Everyone, you will soon witness a miracle!”

“A miracle?” I smiled, “What do you mean by that?”

“You'll find out soon enough!”

We continued to push forward. I started to hear the sound of running water before us. I didn't realize there was a spring in the Gale Forest. It sounded as though it were a stream of some sort. What was going on?

Our twenty man team entered the dense forest. As we continued along, we were met with a cliff. There was an enormous waterfall right in front of us. Below it was a thousand meter deep ravine. Nobody knew that there was a marvel like this in Tian Ling City. The water from the waterfall evaporated and spread out like mist. It was a scene that nobody could see clearly. Qing Qian picked up her dagger and jumped off the edge. I immediately shouted, "Qing Qian, are you trying to die?"

Unexpectedly, Wei Liang grinned, "As expected, Brother Xiao Yao got freaked out too. That's no problem, Sister's fine. Why don't you also try and have your horse jump over!"

The map clearly showed Qing Qian's dot. I was feeling somewhat flabbergasted. What was going on?

I charged forward. My Flying Scythe War Horse whinnied and surged forward. "Shua!" I leapt through the mist. However, right as I charged through, I didn't feel a single drop of water. Rather, my battle horse landed on the ground. Past the mist was a flat land. I could smell the scent of flowers all around me. When I looked back, there wasn't any mist, but rather a tranquil Gale Forest. Wan Er and Dong Cheng were both staring blankly at me.

Qing Qian smiled and explained, "Actually, it's all just an illusion. That mist and the abyss were all just created by the system. That's why no players have tried charging through it. Wei Liang and I were the first. Deer Cry Cave is right behind us. Let's hurry up. I'm not sure when there will be a second fearless person who tries to charge through this."

"Ok!"

With my command, Li Mu, Wang Jian, One Second Hero, Match and all the others charged forward. All twenty of them appeared before me, and waited to enter the map.

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I turned around and saw a mountain covered in trees. The ridge was obscured by the greenery. A cave appeared before me. I could faintly hear the sound of a deer cry. This was the SSS tier, Deer Cry Cave.

Chapter 750: Deer Cry Armor

A deer cry is a very special sound. Shijing once said, “The bleating of a deer, as it nibbles the grass on a plain”. That description, however, wasn’t specific enough. Most players didn’t know what it sounded like, except for older players who had played Hot Blooded Legend. In that game, one of the first mobs that new players encounter is a deer, and killing the animal would force it to release that sound.

But, the way that games have developed has already taken the originally simple RPG into the high sensory stimulation. As I looked into the depths of the Deer Cry Cave, I knew that those monsters were not going to be anything like the mobs in the novice village. And so, I gripped my Zhen Yue Blade and smiled, “I’ll scout ahead. Can a healer give me a [Hundred Battles] BUFF?”

Darling Duck smiled and waved her hand, successfully BUFFing me. It was a Level 13 [Hundred Battles] effect, which increased my attack and defense by 37.4% and lasted for thirty minutes. Thousand League Spring also quickly added BUFFs, and made sure that the rest of the group were also ready before we went ahead.

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“Sha Sha” Horse hooves swiftly passed across the ground. My Flying Scythe War Horse snorted and slowly stepped into the Deer Cry Cave. The cave itself was fairly large, and so riding a horse into it was not a problem. I waved my hand and summoned my Ancient Heavenly Tiger and pulled out my sword. I continued forward into the cave and raised my Zhen Yue Blade. Light reflected off of the blade, and cast a small bit of luminescences on the cave floor. In the distance, I saw an enormous black figure hiding in the shadows of the ceiling. It was the size of a millstone.

Qing Qian quickly added, “Brother Xiao Yao, be careful. That’s a Vampiric Bat, a level 145 Titan Tier monster. Last time, Wei Liang was killed by that mob.”

“Ok, don’t worry, I’ve got it!”

I opened my hand and locked onto the Vampiric Bat, [Great Realm of Desolation]!

“Shua!”

My Zhen Yue Blade split into three images that levitated in the air. It flew out and pierced right into the bat. The minute the strikes landed, I heard a “Ji ji” and 23212 damage jump out. A level 145 Titan Tier monster’s health was around 200,000 which meant that this wasn’t going to be difficult!

This enormous bat flew straight at us. The light reflected off of the blade and revealed long savage teeth. It looked very similar to an evolved Plunderer, it was incredibly terrifying! “Pu Chi!” with one bite, it had taken out a thousand of my health. It hadn’t broken through my defense.

I swung my Dragon Reservoir Sword and threw several cuts and slices along with my Zhen Yue Blade. In moments, I had dealt over ten thousand points of damage. Dancing Forest and Dong Cheng both dealt ranged damage from behind. The first Vampiric Bat screeched and fell to the ground. It had dropped four gold, a soft armor, and an emperor tier weapon. It wasn’t very useful, but could be sold in the end.

Wei Liang raised her dagger and smiled, “Just as I thought, the more people, the higher our strength. This time, we won’t have to worry about being instantly killed....”

Before she even finished her sentence, we suddenly heard a sharp screech from deep within the cave. In the next moment, a mass of Vampiric Bats that flew out from the depths and towards us. I stiffened and shouted, “Set up a defense formation, protect the lightly armored players!”

As I said that, I dashed backwards. Dong Cheng, Darling Duck, Thousand Suns, Xing Lie and the other ranged players retreated to a corner. Matcha, Meng Yao, and One Second Hero lead the knights to form a layer of defense by ramming their shield into the ground. Matcha’s Lion King shield was especially impressive. It released a golden light as she held it. It was truly a symbol of [Zhan Long]’s knight class players.

A countless number of vampiric bats flew at us. Thankfully, we had noticed fairly early and were able to form an Iron Bucket Formation, and protected the ranged players at the center. Afterwards, we pulled out our weapons and began dealing attacks. We threw out skills one after another. My Zhen Yue Blade was particularly fierce, as I let loose a [Seven Star Fragment Slash]. The attack power was incredibly strong, furthermore, it had an extension effect that increased the range of the attack. It dealt 40% splash damage to all targets within a five yard radius. With that one slash I saw a whole flock of bats have their health plunge. It was quite the sight.

Dong Cheng smiled as she threw a [Magma Abyss], “Brother Xiao Yao’s firepower is nothing to laugh about, that Zhen Yue Blade is a god weapon for grinding levels....”

Dancing Forest smiled, “Jeez, that Zhen Yue Blade is a country weapon, how could it be as simple as some god weapon for grinding levels?”

Wan Er picked up her dagger and stood before the outer layer of the protection. Her dagger glowed as she killed a bat and said, “Hurry up and kill. We haven’t even entered the map completely and yet we’re stuck here. That isn’t good news!”

“Yes ma’am!”

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Around ten minutes later, a pile of bat corpses formed. We had killed all of the vampiric bats that were guarding the opening. The experience it gave was very fruitful. I steered my horse over and pushed through the bodies. I could see Emperor and Valkyrie tier equipments lying in piles. I did a simple sweep. All of the weapons that weren’t good were immediately changed into God Army Cards. Everyone knew about my Mohist Five Scrolls and cheerfully gave their consent for me to do so. Besides, a lot of the trash equipments was just a waste of bag space if picked up.

After we finished our sweep, we continued to push forward. I could see slivers of light coming from ahead of us. Steps began to appear. Furthermore, I could see scattered runes etched along the walls. When my

Flying Scythe War Horse stepped onto the first step, I suddenly heard a bell ring beside my ear. Finally, we had formally entered the Deer Cry Cave and a quest appeared—

“Ding!:

System Notification: Please note, you have entered the SSS tier map [Deer Cry Cave] (First Floor), as the first team to enter the Deer Cry Cave, you have activated the SSS tier Main Quest [Ancient Qin Deer], do you accept?

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I immediately accepted. The other nineteen players didn't hesitate and accepted as well. Very soon, another bell rang—

System Notification: Congratulations, your team has accepted the SSS tier main quest [Ancient Qin Deer]!

Quest Introduction: Qin Deer, The emblem of strength for an empire. During the Ancient times, the Qin Emperor was muddleheaded, and commanded his armies to go deep into the mountains to hunt down a Deer Spirit and bring it back to the palace, to make the deer into a mount. From then on, that Deer Spirit became an emblem of the empire's strength. Several thousands of years later, the empire had fallen and the Qin Deer's evil spirit rose up. It took over the villa of a marquis, and turned it into its nest. Your team will charge into the third floor of the Deer Cry Cave. There, you will find this Qin Deer. Kill it and hand the deer's antlers to the king of Tian Ling City in exchange for a generous reward!

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“So it's a main tier quest. Our luck is pretty good!” Li Mu grinned, “I can already feel the Ghost Harvest and Divine Tier weapons calling out to me, Ha ha....”

I urged my horse up the steps and looked at the map. The Deer Cry Cave was in the shape of a Ba Gua*. We fought our way through the layers, meeting quite a few mobs on the way there. Not far from us, we saw a

Bear Tribe Warrior carrying a large mace. It looked a little like the Evil Bear Spirit from the Journey to the West**. It even had an iron cast armor draped over its shoulders. However, it wasn't wearing anything else. Thus, right below its waist, a large black thing hung from its body, swaying as the bear moved.

*TL Note: Ba Gua, Ancient Chinese fortune telling graph, typically used in maze formations, Feng Shui diagrams or when divining Heaven's Will

**TL Note: Journey to the West, popular Chinese myth

Dong Cheng wryly smiled and couldn't help but joke, "It knows to put on chest armor, but not wear pants, what kind of custom is that?"

Wan Er smiled too, "Pig, hurry up and fight it!"

I glanced at its stats, it was a Level 145 monster. However, it was also a Level 3 Hybrid Monster, and so its battle power was not going to be bad. I then nodded, "Li Mu, Wang Jian, charge with me!"

The three of us dashed forward, using our [Charge] state. "Peng peng peng" we rammed into the "Bear Tribe Warrior". We dealt continuous stuns. I then flashed my Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword. "Shua Shua Shua!" I landed several blows. My attack effect was pretty good, I had cut into the bear's flesh. Naturally, this bear wasn't going to wait for its death. It swung its mace, landing it right in my shoulder!

"Peng!"

"4012 ! "

The attack power wasn't too bad, it broke through my defense. Unfortunately for it, I had 67000 health now. Killing me was too difficult of a task.

The three of us surrounded it. After a round of fierce hacks, we killed the first Bear Tribe Warrior. It hadn't dropped any equipment, but it did drop 11 gold coins. The gold faction people in the team were beside themselves in happiness. This time, no matter if we receive other fruits for our hard work, at least we'll have a lot of gold.

We continued along the green railing. As we continued further, we met more and more of the Bear Tribe Warriors. I knew that this quest was too easy so far. From then on, the Bear Tribe Warriors appeared in teams of ten. Motherf*cker, thankfully we had at least ten warrior type players in our team. That was enough tanks.

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and targed a Bear Tribe Warrior in the distance and said, “I’ll lure the first and second Bear Warriors over. Li Mu, you take the third, Wang Jian, take four, Old K 5, Matcha 6, Meng Yao 7, Young Jie 8, Yao Yan 9, and Tang Xin 10. Prepare for this. Healers, watch our health. Whoever has low health, keep them fully replenished. Ranged players, make sure to target your skills one at a time. Let’s clear them out as fast as possible!”

“Yes sir!”

When I first charged, the rest followed behind me and targeted our respective Bear Warriors. Our attacks were swift and organized, making it easy for us to kill. Besides, all of the players here were [Zhan Long]’s top players. Even if the opponent was a Hybrid Demon type monster, we could still easily deal with them.

After killing another wave of ten Bear Warriors, the last monster was killed by Meng Yao’s sword. It roared and died, and something dropped in a flash of green light. It was a chest armor, for heavy armor players. I could see symbols of a deer stitched into the edges. I felt my heart leap, I knew that our chance had come....

“Meng Yao, share the stats!” I quickly said.

Meng Yao picked up the chest plate and waved her hand over it. The stats appeared in the air. As expected, this was an extremely strong outfit. It was a good decision to come to deer Cry Cave today—

[Deer Cry Chest Plate] (Holy Tier)

Type: Heavy Armor

Defense: 1400

Strength: +155

Stamina:+ 151

Agility: +144

Additional: Increase the user's defense power by 37%

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 17%

Defense: Increases the user's MaxHP by 4500 and Magic Defense by 50%

Special Effect: [Deer Cry], increases the user's attack power by 11%

Outfit Set: Deer Cry Outfit - Chest Plate

Required Level: 130

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“Huh....?”

Wang Jian widened his eyes and smiled, “Is this, the first Saint Tier equipment set to appear?”

I nodded, “It probably is. On top of that, it's an attack type equipment. Look, it increases attack power by 17%, and that [Deer Cry] increases it another 11%. If we complete this outfit, then it'll be a terrifying killing weapon!”

Li Mu turned around and looked at the group of bear warriors in the distance and laughed “Darlings, I'm coming for you!”

I was speechless.

Chapter 751: Unyielding Spirit

The first floor didn't have many other monsters, only an uncountable number of Bear Warriors. On top of that, our players didn't kill very fast. Unfortunately, the Deer Cry Armor sets didn't have a very high drop rate. We had spent a whole thirty minutes killing before we got two pieces of the armor. It was a Deer Cry Helmet. I glanced at the stats. It was just as I had predicted, the main stat increase from the Deer Cry Armor Set was the attack stat—

[Deer Cry Helmet] (Saint Tier)

Type: Heavy Armor

Defense: 1280

Strength: +151

Stamina: +147

Agility: +141

Additional: Increases the user's critical attack chance by 40%

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 15%

Defense: Increases the user's base attack power by 700 points

Special: [Deer Cry], increases the user's attack power by 9%

Outfit Part: Deer Cry Armor - Helmet

Required Level: 130

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I threw the helmet over to Meng Yao and said, "How about you put these together and check out the stats? It must be staggering...."

Meng Yao nodded with a smile and put the Helmet and the Chest piece together. In the next moment, the Deer Cry Armor's stats appeared in the air. It was extremely astonishing. It was practically god level armor—

[Deer Cry Armor Set]

Two Pieces: Attack Power +90%

Three Pieces: Defense Power +50%

Four Pieces: Base Attack Power+2000, Magic Defense +270%

Five Pieces: MaxHP +1500, Attack Power+150%

Six Pieces: Ancestral Deer Cry, Each time the user hits the target, it will overlay the user's attack power by 10%, to a maximum of ten times. Lasts for 120 seconds.

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Li Mu squinted and said, "If we have enough of the Deer Cry Sets, can I reserve one?"

I nodded, "Ok, no problem, I'll give the first set to you."

Wang Jian was gaping at the stats, "Once this set comes out, I'm afraid the user's base attack won't be much lower than Brother Xiao Yao with his Zhen Yue Blade..."

Matcha smiled, "That base attack really won't be must lower than boss', however in terms of special skills, defense and splash damage, there is still an enormous gap. Don't forget, the Zhen Yue Blade has splash damage that reaches a five yard range. It's like a small Demolition Bullet and can create panic on the battlefield."

Wan Er stuck out her full chest and smiled, "That's right. I don't think there's anyone in the world who can rival our pig's attack power. Yup, I think that besides Matcha's Lion King Shield, there isn't anyone who can hold against a round of skills when Pig strikes with all his power. Besides, he has a savage little tiger by his side too."

Matcha shook her head with a smile, "No, I don't think that I can stand against boss' attack power. I might be able to stand my ground against one round of skills, but if he continuously attacked me, I'm afraid that I would die a terrible death...."

Wan Er cheerfully smiled, "Yup. Let's keep on killing these Bear Warriors. I'm still trying to get the new skill books to drop. Wu wu, I'm

already Level 133, and yet I still haven't found the new skills....”

Li Mu rubbed his nose with a laugh, “Agh, don't even mention that. To this day, I've only found the [Covering Sword Slash] of all the hidden skills in the swordsmen class. Look at Xiao Yao, with all of those impressive skills.....”

“Good luck! You'll find one eventually!”

“Yup!”

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Our team of players continued to fight our way through the first floor of Deer Cry Cave. After close to three hours of massacre, we finally killed almost all of the Bear Warriors. Despite that, there didn't appear to be much hope for the Deer Cry Outfit's drop rate. We had a total of 11 pieces, and managed to make one set. We handed it to Li Mu. When he put it on, his entire body began to glow with an azure power. Furthermore, we could see the deer symbols etched into the edges of the armor. His attack power had increased quite a bit. With one strike, he could deal fifteen thousand damage. It wasn't much lower than my Zhen Yue Blade's attack.

At the center of the Ba Gua map, we found an entrance that lead to the lower level. It was also where the first floor BOSS resided. After one hour of walking, we found a General with a bear head and a bronze blade in his hand. As we neared him, we were able to read the BOSSes stats—

[Bear Head General] (Demon Harvest BOSS)

Level: 145

Attack Power: 15500-18900

Defense: 13000

Health: 300,000,000

Skills: [Blade Sweep] [Bear Advance and Retreat] [Thunder Surge]
[Ground Ripping]

Introduction: Bear Head General, is a warrior that has been demonized. He was originally a brave hero of the human race. After he entered Deer

Cry Cave on an expedition, he was put under control by the demon power of the Qin Deer. His character became more violent and his body began to evolve so that he had a bear head. With the ancient blade “Ocean Suppressor”, he guards the first floor and became one of the Qin Lu’s first dogs

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Gripping my sword in one hand, I smiled, “Prepare to advance. Matcha, you’ll be the tank, and I’ll focus on controlling his attacks. We’ll trap the BOSS in his place, while the rest spread out. Healers, stand a little further. Immediately revive anyone who dies. There’s no need to hesitate . Best case scenario, we’ll kill the BOSS as fast as possible.”

“Yes sir!”

Everyone nodded. Matcha then raised her Lion King Shield and pulled out her sword. She urged her Thousand League Moonlight forward, with her snow white cape fluttering behind her. [Zhan Long]’s number one lady knight was extremely charming. No wonder Old K, Bai Qi and the others were practically drooling. Unfortunately, Matcha’s sights were set rather high. Even though she had a pretty good relationship with everyone, she didn’t seem to have a love interest with anyone.

“Peng!”

She used a [Charge] and rammed against the BOSS, immediately getting the BOSS’s attention. He roared and shouted at Macha, “Little girl, you look soft and weak, you must taste very good. Come at me, why don’t you come and get a taste of my blade. It’s been a long time since I’ve had fresh blood like yours!”

[Blade Sweep]!

“9929 ! ”

Sparks flashed and the ancient blade landed on the Lion King Shield. The blow had only dealt an attack with four digits. It hadn’t gone over five. Looks like Matcha won’t have a problem holding against this BOSS’ attacks. That Lion King Shield really is a godly item that’s on the level of a

national treasure!

Closely after that, the BOSS dealt another [Bear Advance and Retreat]. His body suddenly surged forward, knocking Matcha back a couple steps. Right after that, he dealt a [Thunder Surge], channeling several bolts of lightning into his blade. “Pa pa pa!” He dealt a round of chaotic attacks. However, now that Matcha had her Lion King Shield, losing another thirty thousand health was no problem. Plus, the healers immediately brought her health back up.

“Charge!”

I dashed forward, swinging both my Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon REservoir Sword and dealing a [Wind Blade]+[Fierce Ice Blade]+three normal attacks. I had dealt three extremely high damage numbers—

“17328 ! ”

“17442 ! ”

“15341 ! ”

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In that moment, the aggro had shifted and the BOSS spun around and threw a blade at me. “Ka Cha!”, he had cut off 12000+ of my health. Motherf*cker, my defense was much lower than Matcha’s!

“Boss!”

Matcha smiled and urged her battle horse, using a [Brave Ram] against the BOSS. Afterwards, she dealt a [Holy Provoke], shifting the BOSS’ aggro back to herself. The BOSS then dealt continuous cuts at her Lion King Shield. I took the chance to get in a couple of hits and slice down its health. With my attacks, plus the archers, mages, and musketeers’ this BOSS’ health quickly plunged. Even if he had three hundred million health, he still wouldn’t be able to hold up against our attacks.

In less than ten minutes, the BOSS’ health dropped below 15%. Its body looked as though it were drenched in blood. Its sturdy body was now ripped up, tattered and bleeding from all of our attacks. It was almost too

gory to bear. In an anguished scream, the BOSS released its final attack—[Ground Ripping]!

This was a dimensional attack with an extremely strong force!

I raised my blade high and activated a skill interrupt effect. However, I wasn't able to interrupt the skill. There was no other way. Wan Er immediately activated her skill—[Heaven's Lullaby]. Instantly, the BOSS was stunned for seven seconds and the [Ground Ripping] effect didn't activate. Dong Cheng then cast a [Lullaby], however that was dodged. Thousand Sun's cast the same skill and it was a success. Once the [Lullaby] was a success, then the entire skill was cancelled and it died in its womb.

“Continue, throw all of your firepower!”

I raised my sword and dealt rapid cuts. Everyone made a circle and threw their firepower. Even the Ghost Harvest BOSS wasn't our rival. [Zhan Long]'s players have grown to unbelievable lengths in this short time. After all, in the past, everyone's health was around 20,000, making it so that the BOSS could kill us in two hits. However, now that [Zhan Long] started scaling up the Steel Blade Horsemen and the Black Flame Armor, almost all of the main players with mounts had over 50,000 health. Not only that, but our defense was also starting to improve. As long as the BOSS couldn't instantly kill us, we could retreat and continuously switch the players taking damage. This way, torturing a Demon Harvest BOSS to death was only a matter of time.

In less than twelve minutes, this Level 145 Ghost Harvest BOSS let out an anguished cry and fell to its knees with a heavy thud. As it fell over, a golden light rose around its body. Wang Jian and Li Mu both leveled up. Furthermore, a pile of equipment dropped beside the BOSSes body. This time, Wan Er had dealt the last strike, leaving me in the dark on what had dropped.

Brother Xiao Yao, go get our plunder!” Qing Qian urged.

I nodded and glanced through the rewards. I suddenly saw a faint blue skill book. I picked up the skill book first and waved my hand over it. The

stats floated in the air—

[Unyielding Spirit] (SSS tier): Grants the user the [Unyielding Spirit] effect. Defense, attack and movement speed stats increase greatly. Furthermore, attack range increases by 3 yards, and there is an additional splash effect. Every second of this status uses one point of strength. Required Level: 130; Required Class: Assassin, Learning this skill consumes ten points of charm

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“D*mn, the Unyielding Spirit has dropped!” Wolf excitedly smiled.

Qing Qian smiled, “Your luck isn’t bad at all, you’ve finally got the assassin’s new skill book. That should be the first [Unyielding Spirit] right?”

I picked up the book and said, “Well, you four assassins, come and roll for it.”

“Ok!”

Wan Er, Qing Qian, Wei Liang, and Wolf all rolled for it. Qing Qian rolled a 97 winning the skill book. She was jumping up and down with excitement.

“Shua!”

The skill book disappeared in the beautiful girl’s hands. In the next moment, Qing Qian activated the effect. We saw a dark aura rise up around her body. She looked as though she were a demoness that had fallen to the dark side. The dagger in her hand revealed an attack range that reached three yards. Well, an assassin with an area attack effect. The times were really changing.

Chapter 752: Neptune'S Blade

“Congratulations Melon!” Wan Er and Dong Cheng both yelled out.

I smiled too and said, “looks like the drop rate for [Unyielding Spirit] from a Ghost Harvest BOSS isn't bad. We'll just have the assassins kill the BOSS from now on.”

“Lets check out the equipment!” Wan Er excitedly added.

“Ok.”

I picked up the three pieces of equipment that the Bear General had dropped and displayed them all. There was a leather helmet, with elaborate stitching. It looked as though a Flaming Phoenix was rising up into the sky. I decided to look at that first. I placed it in my palm and waved my hand over it. The stats appeared in the sky before us.

[Flame Phoenix Helmet] (Divine Tier)

Type: Leather

Defense: 1300

Agility: +137

Stamina: +135

Strength: +132

Additional: Increases the user's critical attack by 7%

Additional: Increases the user's MaxHP by 2900

Special Effect: [Flame Spirit], increases defense against flame attacks by 150%

Required Level: 130

Required Charm: 140

Required Gender: Female

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I picked up the Flame Phoenix Helmet, and smiled with frustration, “It's

a female helmet. Looks like there's no other way. Wolf, you and this helmet aren't fated at all. How about the assassins and archers ROLL for the equipment?"

Wolf rubbed his nose, "Yup, just getting the experience of seeing it was pretty good!"

Wan Er, Qing Qian, Wei Liang, and Dancing Forest began to roll for the equipment. Very soon, we figured out the victor. Qing Qian was victorious again with 91 points and she put the Divine Tier equipment into her bag. The little girl was practically leaping with joy. There hasn't been a single time before this that she had gotten so many treasures all at once!

The next moment, Qing Qian had put on the Flame Phoenix. She immediately made the flame effect in the helmet disappear, and turned it into its original black state. That was much more fitting for her, and prettier as well.

I picked up the second reward. It was a long blade. It looked very similar to the ancient blade that the Bear General was wielding. I waved my hand over it and let the stats jump up. As I had expected, it was the same blade. On top of that, the stats were very incredible—

[Neptune's Blade] (Demon Harvest Tier - Superior)

Attack: 4750-5800

Strength: +160

Agility: +157

Stamina: +155

Magic: +152

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 65%

Additional: Ignores 30% of the target's defense

Special Effect: [Sea Suppressor], Gives the user a 20% chance of receiving a heal as the weapon moves the power of the sea. The heal effect is two times the user's attack

Special Effect: [Enemy Break], gives the user a 20% chance of forcing the target back and stunning them for 0,7 seconds

Special Effect: [Holy Body], summons the power of holy spirits to the user's body and awakens the spirit of the heavenly warrior, greatly increases the user's attack and defense. Lasts for five minutes and consumes 110 Rage

Special: Demon Harvest Weapon 1782

Required Level: 130

Required Class: Swordsman, Knight, and Monk

Required Charm: 170

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It was a Demon Harvest weapon. Just the attack power was enough to make a person gulp. It had completely surpassed my Dragon Reservoir Sword. Especially that [Sea Suppressor] effect. It had a 20% chance of activating, and if it was calculated off of my attack power. It would instantly heal around 40,000 of my health. This means that someone could use this in a battle against tens of thousands of soldiers, and as long as he didn't receive focused firepower, who could kill him?

"F*ck, it's another weapon, and it's a Ghost Harvest weapon. Our luck today is incredible!" Wang Jian smiled with his fist gripped, "Wan Er, I couldn't tell before, but your drop rate is incredible. You got another Ghost Harvest weapon!"

Wan Er smiled, "Well, how about everyone ROLL for this blade. Remember, whoever gets the sword has to treat everyone to dinner!"

"They must." Li Mu smiled, "Then, how about all of the swordsmen, knights, and monks step up and ROLL for it?"

I nodded and said, "Yup, you guys ROLL for it. I have the [Kill for Blood] effect on my Dragon Reservoir Sword, so there's no need for me to get another blade. You guys fight for it. That Neptune's Blade is pretty great!"

"Yes sir!"

A group of knight class players began to ROLL for the weapon. One after another, the numbers appeared before everyone and the competition was getting fierce—

Wang Jian—77 points!

Yue Yao Yan—52 points!

Matcha—81 points!

Meng Yao—87 points!

The moment I had hoped that my sister would get the Neptune's Blade, Li Mu suddenly got a shocking number—100 points! Nobody had expected that Li Mu, and his crap luck, would actually get a hundred. It was a miracle! However, since Li Mu was the boss of Valiant Bravery and was one of the pillars of [Zhan Long], so giving him a godly weapon like that was a pretty good fit.

I threw the Neptune's Blade to Li Mu. He immediately equipped the weapon. He pulled out some Spirit Gems and evolved the blade up to +5. He couldn't help but laugh, "D*mn, my base attack is only 4000 points away from Xiao Yao. He he, too cool!"

Wang Jian and the others all congratulated him. I then glanced at the last ring. It was a gold tier, and looked as though it were just some regular equipment that drops after the really good equipment drops. There was always usually some trash equipment that's there to surprise everyone.

"Alrgh!"

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and said, "Let's go, we're going to prepare to head to the second floor. Let's do this as fast as we can. I have to go to my internship tomorrow morning!"

Matcha laughed, "Boss, work? That can't be. You're actually going to work? Isn't the beautiful Wan Er feeding you properly?"

I furrowed my brow and said, "What'd you say? I need to be raised by her? I'm a man, I must have the ability to make my own living. Otherwise, I won't even be able to straighten my hip at that point..."

Wolf smiled, “Brother Xiao Yao, where are you working?”

“Secret....”

“..... ! ! ”

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At the center of the deer Cry Cave, an enormous Tai Ji* diagram opened up. Below it was an endless cave. I jumped straight in, my cape fluttered behind me. A crazy wind blew up around me. Nobody would have imagined that the environment in the second floor would be so nasty. Under the crazy wind, we practically lost all sense of direction. “Peng!” I landed on a rock and regained my balance. A ray of light shined from above. When I looked up, I saw that the second floor was around a hundred meters wide. This small space had actually turned up a crazy gale of wind. I could even see Wan Er and Dong Cheng being carried in the wind. A group of twenty people came down scattered in different directions.

“Careful!” I said into the team chat, “Nobody got hurt right?”

Li Mu grunted, “Darling Duck and I were rather close. I’m heading over there now. The second floor monsters are pretty savage!”

Actually, the second floor’s topography was also based around stone pillars and enormous garden walls. It was large and spacy. At the center, there were several fierce tigers that were acting as guards. “Mang Battle Tiger”, a level 147 Hybrid Demon monster, Level 4. It was around the same level as the Magic Sword Masters of the Hybrid Demon Territory. After the twenty of us were scattered by the wind, all of the people who didn’t have much attack power were surrounded and killed.

In the team chat, Thousand League Spring, Xing Lie, and Wolf’s names had all become dull, demonstrating that they were killed. Li Mu and Wang Jian only had around 50% of their health left and it was in the middle of jumping up and down. They were probably in the middle of fighting. Not far from me, I saw Dancing Forest running and shooting from her bow. She only had around 20% of her health left.

I quickly urged my Flying Scythe War Horse forward. I used a [Seven Star Teleportation] to rush forward, and arrived right beside Dancing Forest. I swung my Zhen Yue Blade, and threw a [Fierce Ice Blade] right onto one of the tigers. At the same time, my Ancient Heavenly Tiger lunged forward, and attacked another tiger. We had made it in the nick of time, otherwise Dancing Forest would've been killed.

“Wa...”

Dancing Forest sat down beside a pillar, her face pale, “D*mn, that was f*cking scary. Two of those tigers suddenly appeared. Thank god you were close by!”

I swung my blade, and dealt another cut and smiled, “Help me deal some firepower. Let’s finish these two tigers off as soon as we can so we can meet up with the rest.”

“Ok!”

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With the two of us working together, our speed was much higher. When the second Mang Battle Tiger fell, it dropped another piece of Deer Cry Equipment, it was the armor set we need. I put it into my bag. I then searched through the map to determine what everyone else’s location was. The twenty people had been scattered across four quadrants. That gale had caught us off guard.

Just a hundred meters away from us were Wan Er and Dong Cheng. Thankfully, under the protection of Wan Er, Dong Cheng was safe. Wan Er and I began to clear the map as we traveled forward along the border. After killing a dozen of the Mang Tigers, we met with Li Mu and Wang Jian. Close to an hour later, the twenty of us were finally together again. All of the ones that had died in battle had been revived. Everyone was feeling their blood boil. This Deer Cry Cave was extremely abundant with resources, however this map was somewhat stingy.

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We continued killing along the long hallway. We hadn’t let a single tiger

go. Not long afterwards, we actually encountered a Level 1 Mang Battle Tiger. It had been turned into a pet by Yao Yan. It was a Saint Tier BOSS level pet and had incredible stats.

As we were grinding levels, we also got continuous news from Tian Ling City—

The guildmaster of [Prague], Yan Zhao Warrior had killed the Sky Demon Gu Lie and obtained a Ghost Harvest Long Sword!

[Legend]'s Enchanted Painting had obtained a Divine Tier BOSS pet from the map just north of the Steel Blade Mountain, Vast Peak!

Q-Sword from [Hero's Mound] had killed a BOSS in the Barbarian Tribe and obtained a Demon Harvest Battle Axe!

[Vanguard]'s vice guildmaster Simple had been ambushed and killed by several unknown beggars in the Fairy Path Forest!

Minimalist had lead four thousand Greedy Wolf Raiders and destroyed a two thousand man team from [Epic] in Beast Spirit Valley!

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There were a lot of battles going on in Tian Ling City. Everyone was either grinding levels and getting equipment, or else there were all sorts of PKs going on. Among the different news that was coming our way, [Thousand Burial] occupied the most headlines. As before, they understood that the Greedy Wolf Raiders needed to rely on killing and plundering in order to grow and sustain itself. And so, Minimalist and You Yi kept that fact in mind and were continuously cleaning out players from smaller guilds. [Flying dragon] and [Wrath of Heroes] had all suffered the same treatment. Even so, they didn't dare to voice their anger. [Thousand Burial] now had 30,000 Greedy Wolf Troops, enough to make any second rate guild tremble in fear.

Currently, the cavalry of most guilds haven't even surpassed 30,000, whereas [Thousand Burial] was now in charge of 30,000 Greedy Wolf Raiders. That was enough to demonstrate the wild ambition of Not Ordinary and You Yi. They wanted to scale up their operations, no matter

if the Greedy Wolf Raiders had been washed out or not. They were just waiting for another opportunity to upgrade their mounts and once again dominate Tian Ling City!

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Unfortunately, the country wars were drawing closer, and there shouldn't be time left for [Thousand Burial] to satisfy their desire for an internal battle.

Chapter 753: Boiling Mountains

Three hours later, we cleared out all of the Mang Battle Tigers on the second floor of the Deer Cry Cave. By the end of this, we had completed the fourth set of the Deer Cry Outfit. We had already given up hope on mass producing this set. Even if we had cleared out the entire third floor, at most we would have six or seven of those Deer Cry Outfits. But, that wasn't bad either. We would only give those to the most top tier swordsmen of [Zhan Long] to equip. That way, they would be able to deal the greatest force.

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“BOSS is here, it's a tiger.”

Qing Qian raised her dagger and charmingly stood beside a wall. She smiled to me, “It's a wild beast type BOSS. Logically speaking, its drop rate for pet eggs and mounts should be fairly high. Everyone pray for good luck!”

I nodded, “Prepare for the fight, I'm going ahead to check out the BOSS's stats!”

“Yes sir!”

I lead my horse forward. When I was only 40 yards away from the BOSS, his stats appeared. It was another level stronger than the BOSS from before, but it shouldn't be too much of a problem. Everyone's equipment and levels were growing better and stronger. Unless the BOSS was a Hybrid Demon King. Otherwise, the Ghost Harvest BOSS's are no longer unrivaled. Besides, we had twenty people with us this time, with all types of attacks and players. There was nothing to fear.

The fierce tiger was at least three meters tall and looked more like an elephant. The fur on his back did not look soft at all, but rather spiky, like a porcupine. It growled, revealing long and sharp canines that looked to be at least 20 centimeters long. The sight of it made goosebumps rise up on my arm. A dull red flaming aura rose from its body, giving off heat. Furthermore, that fierce tiger looked straight at me, its eyes filled with

killing intent—

[Hell Fire Tiger] (Ghost Harvest BOSS)

Level: 148

Attack: 16200-19500

Defense: 14000

Health: 360,000,000

Skills: [Hellfire Claw] [Awe of the Land] [Burstfire Raid] [Boiling Mountains]

Introduction: Hellfire Tiger, originally a battle beast raised by one of the kings in the depths of hell. The Hellfire Tiger was born from within the boiling depths of magma. It had taken the power of the flames to stay alive. It is extremely strong. After it was tamed, it became the tooth and claw of Hell. While on a mission, it was brought to the human world. In the end, it was surrounded by three Holy Domain Heroes. It escaped with mortal injuries and ran to Deer Cry Cave where it slowly recovered. Finally, it was tamed once again by the Qin Deer and became one of the Beast Guardians

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“The skill names are really pretty...” Meng Yao said as her eyes lit up.

Qing Qian agreed, “Yup, Awe of the land, Boiling Mountains, who knows what kind of effects those are. Should we prepare to attack now? Matcha will be our tank and Brother Xiao Yao will be back up.”

I nodded, “Yup, sounds like a plan. When we attack and the BOSS activates a skill, let’s do all we can to interrupt it so that we can decrease our losses. Its attack power is incredibly fearsome, we cannot underestimate this tiger. On top of that, it’s clear as day that his strength is above that of the bear.”

“Yes sir!”

Matcha raised her Lion King Shield and lead her horse forward. “Peng!” she rammed against the Hellfire Tiger. She swung her long sword and

activated [Skyshaker Pierce]+[Flame Axe]. “Pu pu!” She dealt 4000+ damage. Matcha’s defense was incredibly high but with the Black Flame Set, her attack was pretty high up as well.

“Grr....”

The Hellfire Tiger let out a roar and swung its fierce claw, lunging right onto the shield!

“15227 ! ”

My heart shook. That attack power is insane. Even the Lion King shield couldn't completely block it. If I were the one there, I’m afraid that the tiger would’ve taken out twenty thousand of my health in one swipe?

Thankfully, the Hellfire Tiger’s normal attack wasn’t as high. With a normal hits it only dealt around 6000 damage. With our healers around to wean Matcha, there wasn’t any fear for her life.

Behind me, I set up an [Azure Dragon Crossbow]. I urged my horse forward and then activated a [Black Tortoise Realm] onto the BOSS, and decreased its movement speed. I then set up a [Soul Army] to back up our attacks. Then, with both my Zhen Yue Blade and my Dragon Reservoir Sword, I cut into the side of the BOSS, and activated all kinds of skills and attacks against it. I had a country weapon in one hand. Even a Ghost Harvest BOSS couldn’t block the edge of my attacks!

Qing Qian let out a shout and a black fog covered her body. It was as though a demon witch from hell was charging towards the BOSS. Her dagger now had a range of three yards. “Shua shua shua!” She swiped at the BOSS’s back, dealing quite a bit of damage. In addition, her damage output was not much lower than Wan Er’s. I was speechless. The attack power of the [Unrivaled Spirit] was incredibly strong. What would happen if Wan Er learned it?

“Grr!”

The Hellfire Tiger roared and swept its tail at Wan Er and Qing Qian, dealing 15,000 daamage. Thankfully it wasn’t life threatening. Following that attack, the flaming aura around the Hellfire Tiger’s body suddenly

grew and flames rose from the tiger's four paws. I was all too familiar with this attack. It was the [Burstfire Raid]! A tiger the size of a mountain was lunging right at us!

“Huh?!”

Dancing Forest and Xing Lie both didn't get the chance to dodge and was instantly killed in the onslaught. They had both received close to 30,000 damage. I quickly opened my hand and activated, [Binding Chains]!

Peng!”

Iron chains burst through the floor and wrapped around the tierg's legs, locking it in place. Matcha quickly charged over and attracted the BOSS to her again. Darling Duck quickly revived the two of them. This could be considered a warning that the BOSS was giving. If we underestimate it, then the price we pay would be equally as heavy.

“Surround it!” Li Mu roared/

Wang Jian and Old K lead a group of people over, surrounding the BOSS. As soon as it was trapped, the Hellfire Tiger roared again, creating a small whirlwind in the cave. It was his [Awe of the Lands] skill. Thankfully, Li Mu and Wang Jian had a lot of health. Both of them retreated with 25% of their health left, allowing Matcha and I to continue tanking the BOSS' hits.

From then on, nobody dared to underestimate the enemy. Li Mu and Yao Yan all looked on from afar, waiting for Matcha and I to switch out when we hit critical health. This didn't mean, however, that we didn't have a chance. Matcha had the Lion King Shield to protect her, so killing her was a far too difficult task. I, on the other hand had 20% [Drain]. Additionally, with the Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir's attack, my survivability was also pretty incredibly. As long a we could hold our ground then we could survive.

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Around fifteen minutes later, with the combined effort of Dong Cheng, Dancing Forest and Xing Lie's ranged attacks, the Hellfire Tiger was in critical health. Despite that, its attacks were just as equally fierce. Even

though none of the people in our group had hit the Holy Domain, our advantage in intelligence exceeded that of the advantage in a Holy Domain and so killing the BOSS with our team work was not hard.

“Grrrr....”

The Hellfire Tiger suddenly stopped its attack. It raised its head towards the sky and let out a series of roars. The earth split and flames soared into the sky. Furthermore, magma bubbled out like water and spurt forth. At the same time, an enormous rock that looked like a mountain suddenly fell from the sky. Motherf*cker, so this is what the Boiling Mountain was. Flames spewed as though under a cauldron as the rivers water boiled and the boulder the size of a mountain. So that is where the skill name [Boiling Mountain] had come from.

“Careful!”

I gripped my Zhen Yue Blade and shouted, “Retreat, the attack range is a hundred yards!”

Qing Qian and Wan Er both quickly darted backwards. Anyone who couldn’t get out could only prepare their potions and take the attack head on. Matcha and I continued to attack. Even Meng Yao’s Verdant Peach was beside us, ramming into the BOSS. This [Boiling Mountain] effect lasted a whole twelve seconds. Three of the people in our team had died while Matcha and I had both fallen to critical health.

“Matcha, retreat!”

I covered for her. I could not let [Zhan Long]’s chief knight die. I myself had activated my [Chi You Body]’s unrivaled effect to take on the BOSS. It was 25 seconds long, enough time for everyone to regain full health.

The magic of the unrivaled body is that you could sustain attacks without taking damage to your health. It wasn’t like other unrivaled skills that don’t take attacks. This way, it was much easier to attract firepower and aggro.

Not long after Matcha, Meng Yao and Li Mu returned to full health and once again joined in the battle. The people who had died were all revived.

In less than two minutes, the Hellfire Tiger cried out and collapsed in a pool of blood. It had finally died. Additionally, it dropped a pile of equipment. Among them, I saw another faint green skillbook. I felt my heart jump. Our luck wasn't bad, looks like we got another skill!

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"We finally killed it!" Li Mu took a deep breath and said, "Guildmaster, quick, go and check out what we got."

"Got it."

I leapt off my horse and walked forward and picked up the drops. Afterwards, I took out the green skillbook first. I waved my hand over the skillbook to see the stats. It was the second [Unrivaled Spirit] book. This time, the three assassins ROLled for it again and Wolf ended up as the victor. Wan Er's beautiful eyes were practically red. "Wu wu" she cried. She had fought a week's worth of BOSSes trying to get the skill but it still hadn't come. In the end, while we were in Deer Cry Cave, we got two in a row and she still couldn't get it.

I smiled comfortingly to her and then rubbed her shoulder, "Don't panic, you'll get it eventually. Isn't it just a skillbook? If it really doesn't drop, then we'll just buy it from another player."

Wan Er nodded, "Well, looks to be that way...."

We continued looking through the rest. The Hellfire Tiger gave us four equipments and they all looked pretty impressive. However, what was most disappointing, was that of all four pieces, there wasn't a single one that was worth our attention. The highest tier was a Saint Tier while the lowest was a Green tier. I gripped the Green tier sword, at least it had given us the [Unrivaled Spirit] book, otherwise it would've all been for nothing.

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"Everyone, stand over there!" Li Mu waved. Everyone followed his command and stood on the roulette plate at the center of the second floor. Like that, it would send us to the third floor.

“Shua!”

Magic light rose up all around us. I could hear the wind screeching from all sides. In the next moment, all twenty of us appeared on the third floor. I could hear the cries of deer in all directions. Birds sang and fragrant flowers bloomed. It looked nothing like the deadly battlefield that we had imagined. Have we finally arrived at the Qin Deer’s den?

Chapter 754: The Glory of Two Country Weapons

A small stream flowed between the mountain ranges. On both sides were thick and flourishing forests. The third floor of the Deer Cry Cave was practically heaven on earth. Small flowers dotted the green landscape. I took a deep breath of the soft fragrant woody notes on the wind. As a breeze brushed past my face, the red and green trees swayed lightly in the air. The landscape was unparalleled in beauty. Around forty yards away from us, a red deer was nibbling on the grass beside the stream. There was a soft holy light glowing from the the Deer Spirit's head, planting a seed of awe in our hearts.

“Woah, this place is really beautiful...” Wan Er smiled carefreely. After spending so much time in the Iron Cage of a city, even if this scenery is fake, it still gives a pleasing feeling.”

Li Mu replied, “This really is nice. It’s even more beautiful than the Shou Xi Lake in Yang Zhou.”

Wang Jian smiled, “That Deer Spirit is also prettier than the so called beautiful women in Shou Xi Lake....”

I pursed my lips, “Pretty my *ss, that Deer Spirit is a monster. Everyone, be wary. I’m only forty yards away and yet I still can’t see the Deer Spirit’s stats. It’s strange. Just what level is it? Old K, you go and check!”

Old K raised his battle axe and walked forward. In the end, before he could even get close to the Deer Spirit, it raised its head and let out a cry. Magic suddenly burst around the Deer’s antlers. In the next moment, “Pa Tse!” a bolt of lightning descended from the sky, and cracked Old K smack in the head, and dealt 17332 damage.

“What the f*ck...”

Wolf was stunned, “That’s an instant magic attack. Old K, cut it down!”

Old K swung his battle axe and charged forward. After all, he had a lot of brothers behind him to give support.

I also lead my horse closer to the deer. Only then did I see that the monster was Level 150. It was fourteen levels higher than me, and so naturally, I wouldn't be able to see the stats. However, the Deer Spirit's skills were very distinct. One was a lightning attack, while the other was a defensive aura that surrounded its body. The shield could block a certain level of damage. Furthermore, it dealt a burn effect on the enemy. Other than that, there was the thunderbolt skill. It deals an area attack of around five yards range. Instantly, Old K and I had lost over ten thousand health. The magic attack of this mob was truly impressive. A level 5 Hybrid Demon should be around this level of strength as well. Otherwise, Frost and Zi Shu wouldn't be so worried as they toughened the defenses in Dragon City.

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"Level 150 Deer Spirit, Level 5 Hybrid Demon. These are the monsters on the last floor."

Wan Er picked up her dagger and got a few bloody cuts on the Deer. She deftly threw out a series of attacks, and instantly racked up nearly 40,000 damage. The moment that the Deer Spirit raised its head, Wan Er pulled out her iron umbrella. "Peng!" she had successfully defended against the magic attack. The momentum of the attack had thrown her backwards though. As soon as her boots touched the ground, she lurched forward, and fought the Deer Spirit again. She then smiled, "Hurry up and fight. It's already eleven at night, we still have to go to work tomorrow morning...."

Dong Cheng threw a [Thunderbolt Finger] and grinned, "Wan Er, have you already become subservient to the corporations? Tomorrow's a Saturday, there's no need to work...."

Wan Er stiffened and smiled in surprise, "Oh... Yay, then don't wake me up early tomorrow. I want to sleep until noon!"

Dong Cheng replied, "Eh... alright then, I'll do that with you...."

One Second Hero replied, "I want to too..."

Wang Jian glared at him, "You dumbass, that's Brother Xiao Yao's girlfriend!"

One Second Hero added, "I said I want to log off to go to the bathroom...."

Wang Jian said, "Oh, go ahead then...."

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The Deer Spirit's attack and defense were both pretty good. Especially that Thunderbolt attack. It was deadly for a situation like ours where there were three to four people surrounding the monster and attacking. It could let loose a barrage of lightning. After fighting for less than thirty minutes, some people had already leveled up. Golden rays of lights rose up around me. Just another sign that our rewards for this mission were very nice.

On top of that, these Deer Spirits had a higher drop rate for the Deer Cry Equipment than all the others. In one hour, we managed to get eight pieces. It was around 40% higher than the past monsters. Looks like [Zhan Long] will be able to create 1-3 more outfits for the close combat players. That was good, after all, [Zhan Long] will definitely make it their goal to use the Deer Cry Outfits on the battlefield. If our enemy were to run into multiple people of ours who wore this set then they might as well just surrender.

We kept fighting all the way until three in the morning. Finally, we had killed all of the Deer Spirits. There was only one corner of the map left, since that was the Qin Deer's den. We left the BOSS until the end. Either way, nobody had come into the map yet. Even if they had, there wouldn't be enough time. In terms of small scale team battles, who in Tian Ling City could match [Zhan Long]?

We had gathered a total of 12 sets of Deer Cry Outfits, as well as six extra parts. That was fine too, Li Mu, Wang Jian, Old K, Dong Cheng Lei, and Yue Yao Yan were all adorned with the Deer Cry Outfits. I had given out seven sets to the people who were with us. The rest were in my bag, to be divided up when we returned to the city. For equipment this good, I wasn't worried that people wouldn't want it.

.....

We heard the loud cries of a deer travel out from the depths of the

valley. As we got closer, we saw an enormous deer about three meters tall that just stood there. I could see a divine aura coming from its entire body, as though it were the mount of a god. But, we all knew that this was the final BOSS. There was no way it was going to be an easy task to defeat it. As before, I couldn't read the BOSS's stats. But, I knew that it must be a magic attack type, Level 150 Demon Harvest BOSS. This was also the highest level BOSS that we had met to this point. Of course, that is besides the Hybrid Demon Kings. After the game updated, Igoras and Lanais had all leveled up. They were probably God Level BOSSes by now, and was no longer something that we players could even dream of fighting.

Prepare to battle. Let's let the BOSS use its skills first to figure out the situation. Whoever's magic defense is the highest, goes first?" Wan Er glanced at our team of knights.

Matcha raised her Lion King Shield and smiled, "The Lion King Shield is with me, so I should be the one to go.... Healers, give me [Hundred Battles], I'll go and try it out!"

"Yes!"

The moment Darling Duck cast [Hundred Battles] on Matcha, Matcha had already charged out. "Peng!" She rammed into the Qin Deer. At that moment, the Qin Deer started to glow even brighter as it dipped its head and charged at Matcha. It had a look of contempt in its eyes, as though it were a god looking upon us mortals. Right after that, the Qin Deer raised its head, and a bolt of lightning raced right out at Matcha's chest!

"Pu!"

"29347 ! "

Matcha shuddered and furrowed her elegant brows, "What a terrifying magic attack. Everyone, be careful...."

Surprisingly, the Qin Deer not only dealt superb magic damage, but also physical. After that bolt, it immediately leaned forward and "Peng!" rammed against the Lion King Shield, dealing 11000+ damage. Matcha's health had already dropped below 50% at that moment. We could not let her tank this BOSS, otherwise, she might end up getting instantly killed.

This high level Demon Harvest BOSS couldn't be killed with blunt force even if we had the Lion King Shield.

“Let me at it!”

I picked up my Zhen Yue Blade and charged forward. I then raised my arm and locked my [Great Realm of Desolation] onto the Qin Deer!

“17361 ! ”

Yup, the BOSS's defense was acceptable and we could still break through it. As I dashed forward, my Dragon Reservoir Sword arced forward. “Pa Pa Pa!” it dealt a chain of attacks. I then swung my Zhen Yeu Blade, and unleashed a burst [Combo] attack along with my [Strength of a Thousand Men]. Both multi attacks landed against the Qin Deer's enormous body, and it shuddered in pain. It immediately directed its aggro onto me. “Hua la!” another bolt of lightning screamed right at me. However, I wasn't the only one hit. Matcha also yelped out in pain. The feeling of lightning running through my body set all my nerves on fire—

“18022 ! ”

“14227 ! ”

.....

Looks like my magic defense was somewhat stronger than Matcha's even when she had the Lion King Shield equipped. It was probably due to the effect from [Wall of Dou Qi]. After all, it was now stacked so that it had a 200% defense. That was an effect that could not be replicated.

The Qin Deer raised its hooves and cried out under my attacks. Blazes of fire began to spread out, and turned into a shield. When the shield was complete, I was stunned as I tried a [Wind Blade]+[Fierce Ice Blade]—

“4727 ! ”

“5002 ! ”

My attack power had been greatly decreased. Isn't this defense increase too high?

Matcha couldn't deal an attack through it either. She quickly shouted,

“Ranged players, decrease your attacks. Don’t drag the aggro away from us!”

Xing Lie, Dancing Forest, and Dong Cheng hadn’t stopped in time. The Qin Deer was already charging towards them. Matcha quickly threw a [Brave Ram], but the attack missed. Even my [Binding Chains] had missed. With no other choice, I could only use my special skills. I raised my arm and used [Grip of Purgatory]. That skill had a 100% success rate. As long as it hit, then it was fine. In the end, the Qin Deer screeched as it stood there. Lightning flashed between its antlers, and then struck the center of our group. Xing Lie, Dancing Forest, and Thousand League had all been slain in the one single attack!

“Calm down and, revive everyone!”

Wan Er charged out front and dragged the BOSS’s aggro to her with [Blade of the Death God]. When the BOSS activated its lightning skill again, she immediately raised her Iron Umbrella and said, “Meng Yao, go and tank the boss. Just use your Iron Umbrella!”

Meng Yao nodded. She’d been ready for this moment for a while. With her Black Flame outfit, she rushed forward on her Verdant Pear. She raised her Iron Umbrella and melded it with her shield. With one hand, she cut forward while the other parried attacks. Even after several bolts of lightning, she had only lost ten thousand health. She was completely fine with holding it off. Looks like the Moon Elves have surpassed my imagination.

Yue Yao Yan quickly joined the battle. Five to seven people dashed forward and controlled the BOSS while the rest focused on firepower.

In a short ten minutes, the Qin Deer’s health was under 40%. I quickly said in the chat, “Matcha, activate the special skill on the country weapon. I’ll do the same. This way, we’ll kill the BOSS without any more casualties!”

Matcha nodded with a smile, “Yes sir. Just in time for me to use that 30 point additional rage ring that I got on the market!”

Matcha lowered her Lion King Shield and successfully activated her skill.

At that moment, a ray of light burst forth and covered everyone's body. A shield symbol appeared above everyone's head. 4000 points of additional base defense and 800 points of additional magic defense. It was the best effect for fighting against a BOSS like Qin Deer!

My Zhen Yue Blade also leapt out as the special skill activated, Zhen Yue Battle Song. It increased the base attack of all friendlies by 4000 and lasted ten minutes!

Chapter 755: Hero's Helmet

Once the Lion King Shield and the [Zhen Yue Battlesong] activated, Li Mu, Wang Jian and Old K's battle power rose to a whole new level. They were actually able to hold off the BOSS on their own, relying solely on potions and heals. The Demon Harvest BOSS was of decreasing importance now. I swung my swords and continued the fight. Under the added BUFF from my [Zhen Yue Battlesong] my Zhen Yue Blade actually dealt 27,000 damage to the BOSS.

The Qin Deer was doomed the moment that it went against us. It had basically wasted all those centuries of training and evolution. Just like that, it was cut apart by our group. Once its health turned red, it activated "Deer Cry Aria", a lasting attack skill. It continuously dealt sonic wave attacks against its targets. Unfortunately, every one of us now had increased our magic defense by 800 points. Killing us was too difficult of a task. Especially me. With my 20% [Drain] effect, I could take the Qin Deer head on without any problem.

.....

"Killing the BOSS like this is a little shameless...." Dancing Forest was having so much fun she could barely keep her mouth closed as she smiled, "Of everyone in Tian Ling City, I'm afraid we're the only ones who can fight a Demon Harvest BOSS like this..."

Li Mu smiled back at her, "Probably, keep killing! I've been waiting for this for a long time!"

Wang Jian swung his sword in a cut and asked, "Who's dealing the kill?"

Wan Er replied, "Well, after that painful lesson from the last BOSS's terrible drops, how about Li Xiao Yao deal the last attack? His charm is over 500 points. Otherwise, it'd be a waste of this BOSS's level and tier."

"Ok!"

.....

Very soon, the Qin Deer only had 1% health left. As soon as that

happened, everyone immediately retreated, while I dealt the final attacks. The 15% dragon power on my Dragon Reservoir Sword activated, dealing two attacks that had three times the damage—

“85623 ! ”

“90351 ! ”

.....

Following that, my Zhen Yue Blade also began to make a distinct noise. The moment that my blade fell, the Qin Deer's head was actually cut off by a sweep from my Zhen Yue Blade. “Hua La!” The deer's antlers fell onto the ground and three pieces of equipment were dropped. They all had a holy light aura. With a single look, I could tell that none of these were gold or silver equipment.

“Shua!”

I leveled up to 137! The experience from this was incomparably generous!

Wolf smiled, “Congratulations Brother Xiao Yao, you're level 137 now! It's a new high!”

I looked at the level rankings and smiled, “Well, I'm still two levels behind Fang Ge Que. That b*st*rd's speed at leveling is just inhuman....”

Qing Qian said, “It's ok, it doesn't matter if your level is low. As long as you get close, I think that even if Fang Ge Que had activated his [Black Tortoise Shield], he would still not be able to survive after a round of your attacks. For Fang Ge Que, Brother Xiao Yao's strength is like a nightmare right now. Last time, Enchanted Painting had said it in their guild chat and Fang Ge Que even conceded.”

I was stunned, “Huh? How the h*ll do you know what other guilds talk about in their guild chat?”

Qing Qian blushed and began to fiddle with the fur on her cape, “Brother Xiao Yao, are you underestimating the intel I have on other guilds? He he, I'm not some kind of decoration that you made as the vice

guildmaster you know....”

I smiled, “Yup, I know that Melon is the strongest!”

Dong Cheng, “Alright already, don’t tease the young ones any more. Hurry up and check out the equipment.”

“Ok.”

I picked up the three pieces of equipment. One was a long staff that was covered in flames. I could hear the faint sound of a deer cry come from it. It didn’t look bad at all. The second was a red battle helmet with a very unique structure. I could feel the killing intent radiating from its edges. It should be pretty good too. Finally, there was a shining necklace. I decided to pick up the staff first. Dong Cheng and Thousand Suns’ were practically drooling. I waved my hand over it and the stats appeared before us. The two girls gasped—

[Deer Cry Staff] (Demon Harvest Tier - Superior)

Magic Attack: 5100-6200

Strength: +170

Stamina: +168

Magic: +165

Agility: +162

Additional: Increases the user’s magic attack power by 80%

Additional: Increases the user’s Magic Burst by 20%

Additional: Decreases the user’s cast speed by 33%

Additional: [Deer Cry], increases the user’s magic attack power by 40%

Special: [Violence], increases the damage dealt by flame attacks by 50%

Special: Demon Harvest Weapon Number 3211

Required Level: 130

Required Charm: 200

Required Class: Mage

.....

I laughed and raised the Deer Cry Staff, This is the second Demon Equipment that we've found since entering the Deer Cry Cave. Our luck is really great. Well then, the two mages, why don't you step up for the raffle!"

Dong Cheng and Thousand Suns walked up, barely able to contain their excitement. They looked as though they were about ready to leap with joy!

71 Points!

43 Points!

.....

They had easily decided the victor. Dong Cheng had not rolled a high number, but was still able to win the Deer Cry Staff. The next moment, the staff disappeared from my hands and into hers. The Dong Cheng right now was a killing machine. With a single wave of that staff, she could make countless warriors die.

Continuing on to the second piece of equipment. It was a flame helmet, and was something that I have coveted for a long time now. As I held the helmet in one hand, I waved my other hand over it to reveal the stats. I could feel a blazing heat radiating from it. There was no way that this had bad stats. When the stats finally appeared, everyone was stunned—

[Hero's Helmet] (Demon Harvest)

Type: Heavy Armor

Defense: 2200

Strength: +175

Stamina: +172

Agility: +170

Magic: +167

Additional: Increases the user's magic defense power by 127% and physical defense by 40% [a]

Additional: Increases the user's base attack power by 1800

Additional: Increases the user's MaxHP by 7000

Special: [Hero's Heart], The user will not be affected by Stuns, Lullaby's, Confusion, or Poison[b]

Special: Demon Harvest Armor Number 0001

Required Level: 130

Required Class: Heavy Class

Required Charm: 300

.....

“What the f*ck!”

Li Mu cursed in amazement. He exclaimed, “What the actual f*ck.... Is this the number one Demon Harvest equipment? It's number 0001 in the Demon Harvest Class. Doesn't that mean it's the best?”

Wan Er nodded with a smile, “Yup, our luck practically exploded....”

Old K, “1800 base attack, 7000 MaxHP, it doesn't look like it's good enough to be the number one Demon Weapon, right?”

Wang Jian shook his head, “Old K, you don't get it. The OP part about this Hero's Helmet isn't the stats, but the special skills. That [Hero's Heart], prevents stuns, lullaby, confusion, poison and what not. In other words... the person who has this [Hero's Helmet] won't be stunned even by an assassin, archer or mage!”

Old K gaped, “F*ck, that's way too OP...”

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I raised the Hero's Helmet and smiled, “Well then, let's ROLL for it and see just who Lady Luck is smiling upon!”

Li Mu thought about it for a moment and sternly said, “I want that Deer Cry Outfit, so I won't take this Hero's Helmet....”

Wang Jian also stepped out, “I also want the Deer Cry Outfit...”

In the end, they all stepped out. Finally, all that was left was Old K, staring at me stupidly. He then chuckled, “They’re all very magnanimous, but I won’t be polite with you, haha....”

I smiled back, “Just what part of you makes you think that lady luck will smile on you over me?”

As I said that, I threw out the dice. They rolled a few times, finally stopping on 11.

Old K roared in laughter. Tears nearly rolled down his cheek, “Motherf*cker, now she’s just laughing at you....”

I glared at him, “Hurry up and ROLL!”

Old K threw out his dice. It rolled a few times. His eyes stared so hard they nearly dropped out of their sockets. Finally it stopped on an incredibly sorrowful number—1 point!

I laughed back and raised the helmet, “Old K, thank you brother....”

Old K’s tears rolled down his cheek, “But, I wasn’t....”

I didn’t bother to hear him out. It was rare for me to get an equipment that I had wanted for so long. [c]

[Xiao Yao Zi Zai] (Dragon Knight)

Level: 137

Attack: 16464-20325

Defense: 11242

Health: 73155

Magic: 15330

Charm: 553

CBN Battlenet Ranking: 6

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I switched out my Magic Dragon Helmet. Now I wouldn’t have the [Dragon Transformation] skill. But, I would have the [Hero’s Heart], that

OP special skill. From now on, I won't have to worry about stun and lullaby. Great! On top of that, with my rage limit, once I'm in the team battles, then most of my rage will be used on skills like [Zhen Yue Battlesong] and the [Halberd Flame], and [Grip of Purgatory]. There was no need to keep the [Dragon Transformation].

Like this, I actually became the biggest winner in this Deer Cry Cave mission. I felt like I had eaten a whole spoonful of honey.

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Continuing on, we took the last equipment. It was a necklace.

[Purple Flame Dragon Bone Necklace] (Demon Harvest)

Strength: +177

Stamina: +172

Agility: +170

Magic: +168

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 75%

Additional: Increases the user's MaxHP by 5000

Additional: Decreases the skill and item cooldown period by 20%

Special: Purple Flame, Increases flame damage by 10%

Special: Mortal Imprisonment, deals an attack on the soul of the target. For 180 minutes after the target is killed, it cannot revive, nor can the spirit awaken. Furthermore, it decreases the target's heal effect by 40%. Consumers 70 points of rage, Cooldown 10 minutes

Required Level: 130

Required Charm: 220

Required Class: All Heavy Armor Class

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Looking at the Purple Flame Dragon Bone Necklace, Li Mu couldn't help but smile, "This necklace's special effect is really savage, it doesn't allow

the player to go online for three hours after they've been killed. This is a killing machine in the team battles!"

I nodded, "Yup, this is great for killing the strong players in a team battle. It's extremely useful. Let's go. Whoever gets this gets to be our compass. Whoever you pick to kill, we'll kill!"

Wan Er grinned, "A close combat necklace, hurry up and ROLL. I saw that the BOSS dropped two books too...."

"Wow, you noticed that too..." I smiled.

"He he, what do you think!"

Very soon, everyone else also finished their ROLLS. In the end, the Purple Flame Dragon Bone Necklace went to Li Mu with 97 points. With this, Li Mu will truly become the compass of our team. After all, whoever he gives that [Mortal Imprisonment], then we can kill whomever. By the time he revives in three hours, everything will be over with.

After we finished splitting up the equipment, there was still two green skillbooks left. When I checked them out, I saw that one was the [Unrivaled Spirit] while the other was [Concealed Spirit]. As for the [Unrivaled Spirit], there was only Wan Er and Wei Liang left who didn't have it. The two girls rolled for it, in which Wan Er lost once again. Her tears nearly dropped out of her eyes, as she watched the [Unrivaled Spirit] go to Wei Liang. Thankfully, when the four assassins rolled for the [Concealed Spirit], Wan Er had finally won. This was most likely the first to appear and be learned in Tian Ling City. After she activated the [Concealed Spirit], every time she attacks a target, she obtained 0.5 seconds of concealment. It was extremely good for ambushing.

Chapter 756: Royal Army Commander

Like this, the Tribe of Deer Cry Cave mission was finally over. The greatest reward I had won from it was the Hero's Helmet. The number one Demon Harvest Equipment. The [Hero's Heart] special effect made my heart jump just by looking at it. Dong Cheng Yue got the Deer Cry Staff while Li Mu got the Purple Flame Dragon Bone Necklace along with that [Mortal Imprisonment]. All in all, most of the main players had received ample rewards from this mission.

As I held the antlers of the Qin Deer in my hands, I said, "Let's go back to Tian Ling City and turn in the mission. Its an SSS tier Main Quest, so who knows, maybe there'll be more awards!"

Everyone nodded.

"Shua shua shua!" Light flashed as everyone teleported to the plaza of Tian Ling City. All twenty of [Zhan Long]'s players had teleported together. I leapt off my horse and led everyone to the palace. On the way there, we saw several patrolling cavalrymen. Tian Ling City was working on moving a large shipment to Ba Huang City. After all, it is a top tier city. There was no way Ba Huang City would have that many patrols. Even the royal palace didn't have as many guards.

I stepped onto the golden stairs and walked into the grand hall of the palace. Both sides were guarded by imperial bodyguards. They carefully examined us, checking our shoulders for our insignias. Only Tian Ling City players could enter. Any other players would most likely be cut down on the spot.

In the great hall, there was a group of dancers gracefully dancing at the center. King Rob was entertaining some officials. The palace dancers swept around the center of the hall in beautiful stances. All of the dukes and ladies widened their eyes and marveled at the beautiful dance. King Rob sat upon the throne, a beauty in his lap and his face slightly flushed as he smiled, "Today, I have invited all of you here in hopes that we drink the night away! After today, I will rely on everyone here for matters of the

state!”

At that moment, a bearded officer stood up and bowed, “Your majesty, I thank you for your generosity. I, and my 30,000 private troops will slave away for the empire. Whatever your majesty needs, my 30,000 troops will fight tooth and nail for you, without any regret!”

King Rob smiled, “Sir Qian Long, please sit. I acknowledge your loyal heart!”

A step below the throne was a large table. The crown prince Theodore smiled coldly, “That man only knows how to drunkenly act. When Dragon City was surrounded, we didn’t see a shadow of his troops. In terms of running away, he will be the first!”

Princess Pearl glanced around and said, “Brother, watch your words...”

On the side, the second prince Owen remained silent. He just held up a cup and gulped down the grape wine. After a few seconds, he quietly said, “The Hybrid Demons in the North are already starting to make their move. Who knows how much longer this peace will remain. I hope that this flowery feast will be enough for those officials to bring out their private armies.”

Pearl smiled, “Brother, do not worry too much, it will happen. After all, they understand the basic theory, if the empire falls, there’s nothing to protect them.”

“Let’s hope!” Owen said, “These days, there have even been some scattered Hybrid Demon troops wandering past the Ice Ridge Mountains in the empire’s territory. Thankfully the adventurer’s have been leaving their nests and killing them. However, I think that the Hybrid Demon Army will soon launch another attack on Dragon City. If we don’t have 200,000 troops, I’m afraid that we won’t be able to hold them off. Lanais is already planning her second ambush.”

Owen furrowed his eyebrows and said, “Isn’t Frost guarding Dragon City? She has the power of a Vice God in her, it shouldn’t be that easy to break through Dragon City, right?”

Owen groaned, "Frost's Vice God power has yet to fully awaken. She may be able to take on a Hybrid Demon King on her own, but two would be too dangerous. Even if the Red Dragon Queen joined with her, then at most, Dragon City can hold off at most three Hybrid Demon Kings. But,...the north has a total of 14 Hybrid Demon Kings! Just a month ago, Frost had sent her team member Qing Luo to Tian Ling City for reinforcements. She asked for ten thousand weapons, three thousand battle horses, as well as food, metals, and laborers."

Owen said, "Yup, I have already reported it to Father. Dragon City's requests, aren't excessive, so it should be allowed. After all...."

Suddenly, Theodore smiled and looked at the officials at the feast, "After all, Dragon City just wants some weapons and battle horses. But they've never asked for beautiful women or gold. That is enough to prove that Dragon City is still the number one defense for humans. And that they are a fort of true warriors!"

Owen nodded, "Yup, I agree with your words! Pearl, from now on, I will leave all communications with Dragon City to you! I will take a faction of the Xia Yu Army to camp in Dragon City so that they can reinforce them at any moment. It's just..."

Owen said, "Just what?"

"It's just, I don't know if Ba Huang City's little princess Angela will allow our army to camp within Ba Huang City's territory!"

Pearl smiled, "Don't worry about that, I've written a letter to Angela. She has no objections to camping troops near Dragon City, as long as that's the only area."

"That's good...." Theodore looked over at the old king with a tinge of worry, "Tian Ling City is our home. Even if the blood flows like a river, we will guard it."

Pearl said, "Yes...."

.....

At that moment, we all got off our horses. We didn't dare act impudently

in the palace. I stood at the very front and lead the other 19 people in [Zhan Long]. A general nearby said, “Who are you. Do you not see that his majesty is in the middle of a feast right now?”

I saw the words, “Dragon Tamer General Li Shi”. Its an NPC general. However, it didn’t seem as though a Dragon Tamer General was a very high position. At least it wasn’t something like Commander. How could he act so arrogantly?

I walked forward and said, “I have found a treasure within Tian Ling City and I am here to present it to the king.”

Li Shi gave a look of contempt, “You found a treasure? How is that possible, unless you stole it?”

At that moment, Princess Pearl stood up and chided him, “General Li Shi, please respect the adventurers of Tian Ling City. Do not forget, who was it that killed all of the monsters in Tian Ling City? It wasn’t the royal body guards under your command!”

Li Shi’s expression turned extremely ugly, “Yes... your highness Princess Pearl!”

However, right as the general sat down, I saw a flash of anger pass through his eyes and I heard him mutter, “That b*ch, what’s she doing, acting all high and mighty. Just you wait for the day I have you in my hands!”

I coldly laughed. This Tian Ling City truly was a shady place!

At that moment, King Rob finally spoke, “Adventurers, what have you found. Bring it to me and present it to me!”

I pulled out the antlers from my bag and said, “I and my men entered the Deer Cry Cave and killed the Qin Deer. From there, we obtained its antlers. It should be one of the treasures that the empire has listed that is up for a reward, right?”

“What!?”

King Rob shuddered, “You... you have really killed the Qin Deer?”

Theodore, go and inspect it!”

The crown prince walked up and accepted the antlers. He suddenly turned around, “Father, it really is the the antlers of Qin Lu. The magic power is radiating off of it.”

As he said that, Theodore turned around and glared at the General Li Shi, “If my memory serves me right, General Li had lead 5000 heavy troops into the Deer Cry Cave to kill the Qin Deer, but ended up completely defeated. I heard that you had lost over two hundred people and had even lost quite a few weapons there. Am I mistaken?”

Princess Pearl smiled, “These adventurers are truly amazing. They must have already surpassed our Royal Troops, isn’t that right?”

As she said that, Pearl turned around to the king and said, “Father, I have a suggestion. How about we reorganize our Royal Army and begin recruiting the adventurers to protect the safety of the country!”

King Rob nodded, “Yup, I agree with Pearl’s suggestion.”

Pearl said, “In the past, the Royal Army only consisted of noblemen. They claimed to bring honor to the country, but they never had the strength. As time went on, the rules of the Royal Army has become lax and our strength has waned. If the adventurers join the army, they will strengthen it. However, I also suggest that General Li be demoted from his position. He is not fit to lead.”

King Rob nodded, “Yup, we will do just as you say. I demote General Li Shi as a deputy general who will be transferred to the Xia Yu Army. However, who do you suggest as the man to lead the Royal Army?”

Pearl pointed her finger, right in my direction. I glanced around and tried to move away. But she kept her finger on me. She smiled, “Father, this adventurer has lead many accomplishments in Dragon City. Furthermore, he is a well respected hero in the empire. He’s even Frost’s personal student. I’ve heard Frost bring him up and she has said nothing but praise.”

King Rob looked at me and smiled, “Young warrior, what is your name?”

I rubbed my nose, “Li Xiao Yao.”

“Ok, Li Xiao Yao!” King Rob straightened his sleeve and said, “You have brought the Qin Deer’s antlers for the empire, and cleared out a large group of demons. Right now, the reward that I am giving you is a large responsibility. Do you accept?”

.....

I stood there shocked. Wan Er, Dong Cheng and Li Mu had all been stupefied. Never would we have imagined that something like this would happen.

“Ding!”

System Notification: Once you have accepted the responsibilities as a Commander of the Royal Armies, you will gain Level+5, Charm+100, Furthermore, you will have the power to recruit any soldiers. It is your responsibility to patrol the safety of the empire. Every day, you must spend at least thirty minutes organizing and strategizing the military. Once a war breaks out, you will personally lead the armies against the enemies. Do you accept the position as Commander of the Royal Armies?

.....

Chapter 757: New Years

Despicable! Just too despicable!

They actually told me about all of the benefits before the responsibilities. How was I supposed to turn down such an offer!!

I looked up and saw King Rob. I then cheerfully said, "I gladly accept your offer to become one of the loyal officers of this empire!"

King Rob smiled, "Good. In order for you to take on this position, I will promote you to the position of Deputy General, fifth rank in the empire. I hope that you work hard for the empire. As for everything else, I will leave to Pearl to assign. That's right, Princess Pearl handles all military matters pertaining to the capital city. You must unconditionally follow her orders!"

"Yes, your majesty..." I still wasn't very used to using that term. Wan Er and Dong Cheng both hid their smiles.

"Our Brother Xiao Yao has been promoted...." Qing Qian giggled.

Li Mu then said, "Guildmaster should be the first player to take on an official position in Tian Ling City, right?"

I shook my head, "Not sure...."

Right at that moment, several rays of light fell upon me from the sky and I rose 5 levels. I was now Level 142. Tian Ling City's highest level player insignia was added to my shoulder. Motherf*cker, just for the sake of this reward, I was willing to pay with 5 hours every day!

.....

Very soon, Wan Er, Li Mu and the other team members had received their rewards as well. Dong Cheng squealed, "Wan Er, guess what I'm going to give you?"

Wan Er blinked a few times, "A Horse God?"

Dong Cheng opened her hand, revealing a light blue book in her hands. She smiled, "It's really illogical, I'm a mage, and they actually gave an "Unrivaled Spirit" to me. Just what is the system saying?"

Li Mu and Wolf each received a piece of equipment. Some of the rewards were applicable, while the others weren't exactly applicable. Those that weren't were basically dealt with internally.

.....

As it grew late, Wan Er and Dong Cheng both went to sleep. I was also feeling tired, but Princess Pearl walked over and said, "Royal Army Commander Li, come, follow me. I'll show you the Royal Army's quarters!"

I nodded. She brought along a couple of personal body guards. Afterwards, she handed me a Commander's tablet. It was proof of my position, the kind that if I put in my bag, it would never drop.

Pearl's battle horse was a fiery red pony. It had beat my Flying Scythe Horse by close to a hundred meters to the battle camp. She smiled mischievously and turned around, "Well, isn't my Little Fire fast?"

I replied, "Yup, it is very fast!"

"Let's go!"

She took me into the camp. The Royal Army's wasn't camped too far from the palace. Inside there was a team of soldiers carrying swords and clothed in armor. They were all patrolmen who were tasked with keeping the safety of the city and keeping the peace. As Pearl walked, she pointed at the different tents and army drill sites and said, "Tian Ling City has a total of seventeen armies that make up its military power. Of our armies, the Royal Army only has 5000 soldiers, the least among them all. However, it is the only army that is allowed to camp within the city. As the commander of the Royal Army, you should understand the honor of that privilege, right?"

I smiled, "This means that unless I were someone that his majesty completely trusted, he would never allow the Royal Army to camp within the city, because this Royal Army is capable of controlling everything in the city."

Pearl nodded, "That's right. Looks like you are a smart man. Actually... Frost had mentioned you in her letter. You are someone to be trusted. At

least, you wouldn't threaten the safety of the capital. And so, that is why I suggested that Father leave the Royal Army in your hands. You've seen it too. That commander Li Shi is actually a greedy b*st*rd. However, he was one of Father's old comrades. Father was nostalgic and that's why he left the Royal Army to him. But, now that you are here, it is time that we strengthen the Royal Army."

I was stunned, "Did Princess Pearl already consider this?"

Pearl picked up a long spear and smiled, "Yes. I was planning on expanding the Royal Army so that it had 20,000 troops which are split into three different divisions, Cavalry, Foot Soldiers, and Siege. Whether it is protecting the city, or using it to fight against other forces, my goal is to create an army that can do anything."

I was a little speechless.

.....

Right at that moment, a line of horses dashed over. One of the men on the horses saw us. Shock flashed through his face and he leapt off of his horse, "Your Highness Pearl, I did not greet you earlier. Please punish me!"

Pearl replied, "Deputy General Song, please forgo the ceremony. Immediately welcome the new fifth ranked military commander of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao. From now on, you are to follow his orders!"

"Yes, my lord commander!" This Song Vice Commander stiffly bowed to me, showing his respect.

I nodded, displaying my acknowledgement.

Pearl then smiled, 'Let's go, we'll wait for the rest in the Strategy Tent.'

"Ok!"

.....

The strategy tent wasn't too big. But, it was at the center of the entire camp. I wasn't completely familiar with the past ways of organizing military, but I could at least tell that this center area was the most important place in the entire camp. Once this place is ambushed, the

entire place would fall apart.

After a few minutes, five of the commanding NPCs arrived. All of them had green expressions as they walked in and respectfully sat down in their respective seats. One of them greeted, “Your highness, why has the commander of the Royal Army been changed? What happened to commander Li Shi....”

“Pearl replied, “General Li has been transferred to the Xia Yu Army. The royal Army will be lead by Li Xiao Yao as the new commander from now on. Everyone will listen to his commands.

One general with a large beard replied “Your highness, why has the empire done this?”

Pearl smiled, “For the sake of strengthening our forces. It's time we make the Royal Army into a branch that can take on the responsibility of handling our empire’s safety, instead of a flock of soft young noblemen for us to raise. Li Xiao Yao will reorganize the entire army. Well then, Li Xiao Yao, what are your first plans?”

I stiffened. The fact that I was now an army commander was starting to sink in. I couldn’t be overly optimistic about this position. I sternly said, “My first step will be to institute a set of standards and begin testing our troops against those standards. Anyone who cannot pass them, will be discharged. This army will no longer feed those noblemen without any battle power any longer.”

Pearl nodded satisfactorily, “And then?”

I smiled, “My second step, will be to personally lead a division of the Royal Army to Dragon City and begin patrolling the Ice Ridge Mountains. It’s time we use real battle experience to train them.”

One of the generals who looked incredibly soft exclaimed, “What?! You’re saying... you’re saying you want us to battle the terrifying Hybrid Demons? My Lord, are you crazy? Do you not know how fearsome those Hybrid Demons are?”

I let out a sigh and licked my lips. I then pulled out my Zhen Yue Blade.

“Peng!” I cut apart the meeting table and coldly smiled, “I have been fighting those Hybrid Demons for several months now and I have killed way over a thousand of those monsters. If you don’t even have the courage to face them, then you should’ve sent in your resignation letter and returned home. Don’t be here wasting our food!”

The five generals were all stunned. After a bit, the bearded one suddenly laughed, “Good. I like General Li’s methods. I, Han Yuan, am willing to hand my life over to you. Even if it means taking a few cuts from those Hybrid Demons in the north. Either way, it’s better than staying in Tian Ling City being treated like a prince!”

Another general who was wearing an eyepatch also smiled, “There’s no need for you to be so happy about war against those terrifying Hybrid Demons, is there?”

The deputy general Song also smiled.

However, the pale soft hearted general was still unwilling, “Just what gives you the right to order us around? And just what makes me have to fight Hybrid Demons for you?”

On the side, Deputy General Song roared, “General Luo, I hope that you are more clear about your current situation. This General Li is a Deputy Commander. He’s three ranks higher than you. You are in no position to give him this kind of attitude. Furthermore, why don’t you open your dog eyes and pay close attention to the blade that he’s holding!”

That was when Han Beard carefully looked at the Zhen Yue Blade. He gaped, “This... is this, the legendary Zhen Yue Blade?! The godly weapon that has been lost in the continent?!”

Pearl smiled, “It is!”

All of the generals were stunned. Deputy General Song sternly said, “If General Li can become the owner of this Zhen Yue Blade, then he must have some super human aspect. I am willing to follow your orders, even if it means going to hell and back!”

The other generals also spoke up. I started feeling a little mischievous,

“D*mn, does this mean that my position in this army had actually come about because of this Zhen Yue Blade?”

Nevermind, there’s no point in pondering about it anymore. As long as I now have the trust of these generals. This way, I can actually command the army. Otherwise, what was the point of my position as the commander. If I let Pearl down, that was the same as disappointing Frost. How would I stay in Tian Ling City after that?

Actually, if I look at the big picture, the most important reason I took this position was because it was very beneficial to the growth of [Zhan Long]. After all, now I have the battle power of a strong army like the Royal Army. This was going to be a very important factor in the country battles. I could personally command this Royal Army. I will make sure that they don’t just die and become the enemy’s experience booster.

.....

I was busy all the way until five in the morning. Finally, I could log off and rest.

I slept all the way until noon the next day. In the end, when I woke up, I heard Dong Cheng Lei’s voice as he let himself into the living room. I walked over and saw that the kid really was there. Furthermore, he was carrying a large basket filled with chocolates, fruits and snacks. Wan Er and Dong Cheng were also there helping him carry it. They were grinning very widely.

“Ah Lei, you’ve come over?” I smiled.

Dong Cheng Lei smiled, “Brother Xiao Yao, Happy New Years! There’s only three days until the New Years, and so I came to deliver some things that I bought for Yue Er. I don’t know if she plans on coming home for the celebrations.”

Dong Cheng cutely said, Bro, don’t ask that much. It's still a ways until its new years. Besides, it’s just a day... That’s right, besides snacks did dad tell you to do anything else?”

Dong Cheng thought for a moment, “He also told me to take you out to

buy some clothes. He said that the price didn't matter."

Dong Cheng's smile widened. She grabbed Wan Er's hands, "How about we go out and do some shopping? We can buy whatever we want. Brother will bring his card along!"

Dong Cheng Lei generously smiled, "Yup, you can buy whatever you want. Vice guildmaster Wan Er, there's no need to be polite."

Wan Er grinned, "Alright... Pig, you should go with us too. Either way, Ah Lei is paying. You should buy some clothing for the new years...."

I rubbed my nose, "Alright then. However, I should pay for my own clothes. Ah Lei should save that money for when he marries his new bride!"

Dong Cheng gave a stupid smile, "Brother Xiao Yao, don't kid with me. Who would fall for someone like me?"

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I wanted to answer him, but after thinking about it for a while, I realized that there really hasn't been a girl who has shown anything for Dong Cheng Lei. All I could do was let out a long sigh....

Chapter 758: The Cancer in the Army

That afternoon, we hit the streets of Hang Zhou.

Even though it was already getting close to the beginning of spring, it was still chilly outside. A lot of the girls out were wearing tights and a skirt to hide from the cold. Yan An street is pretty much one of Hang Zhou's most flourishing commercial streets, and so even in this weather, there was no lack of eye candy for the boys. As we slowly walked along the street, we saw a girl wearing a very short skirt and pantyhose. She carried a large purse and had a smile on her face. The skirt was flowy and swayed with her stride. I then looked over at Wan Er and Dong Cheng who were completely covered. Dong Cheng and Wan Er were practically dressed like they were from the past conservative society. Despite that, the thick coats and sweaters didn't detract from the girl's beauty at all.

"What's that expression?" Wan Er had a puzzled look. She then looked at the pants that she was wearing. With a scoff she said, "Alright alright, when it's new year I'll change into skirts.... Men, so unreliable...."

I protested, "Dearest, what kind of a man do you think I am? Am I really the kind of person that only focuses on outer looks?"

Wan Er pouted her lip, "Are you saying you aren't? Look, that girl wearing the short skirt on the left, her legs are so long..."

"Where?! Where!?"

"....."

.....

After getting beat up by Wan Er, I was dragged into a women's clothing store. I hadn't looked into the different brands, but the price tags on these clothes were all easily over ten thousand RMB. My heart stopped for a second when I saw the numbers. Wan Er, Dong Cheng and Dong Cheng Lei appeared completely calm. After all, they were born into rich families. I composed myself. After all, I was the guildmaster of [Zhan Long], I was at least valued over a hundred million, if not a billion. No matter what, I

shouldn't be balking here.

Very soon, the girls had picked out several pieces. The bill itself was over 130,000!

I did all I could to compose myself. Wan Er put the clothing bag in my hand and suddenly wrapped her arm around my arm. She smiled, "Let's go and get some new clothes for you. Who knows, maybe you'll have to go and visit relatives for the New Years."

I replied, "Besides going to my auntie's, I don't have any other relatives to go to..."

"Even so you need to look good for that! That's right, isn't Meng Yao coming back to Hang Zhou too?"

Hasn't she been spending the entire time grinding levels? I heard that she's arriving in the afternoon. She told me not to pick her up, she's planning on going straight home."

"Ok."

After walking a short distance, Dong Cheng grinned, "Wan Er, the only Zegna flagship store is here. Do you want to take Li Xiao Yao over to take a look?"

"Alright!"

Wan Er tugged on my hand and quickened her pace, "Pig, come and see if you like it or not."

The moment I entered, I could tell that the store was very high end. So this was the Zegna that Dong Cheng was talking about. Even though I didn't know much about brand names, I understood all I needed to know just by looking at the price tag. Just one piece of clothing was over 20,000 RMB. They're practically stealing from me!

"What do you think of this one?" Wan Er picked out a navy blue casual blazer. She put it against my chest and sweetly smiled, "Looks like this piece suits you very well...."

I balked, "27,000.... It's so expensive!"

“But of course. A suit from Zegna is naturally very expensive. To top it off, this is their newest style. Do you like it?” She flashed a very beautiful smile as she looked into my eyes.

I quickly pointed at the male clothing store across the street and said, “The suits in that store look pretty good too. Very straight, how about we go to that store!”

Wan Er’s expression didn’t change at all, “That’s G2000, it's rumored to be a uniform store. Are you trying to dress like a waiter?”

I replied, “But, it's so expensive....”

“Oh grow up...” Wan Er sighed, “Alright then, now that I have decided for you, then I’ll pay for this. Either way, I still have a lot of money on my card. If I don’t spend it, it’ll go to waste....”

To which I replied, “No you can’t, I’ll pay for it....”

“Don't you even try. For a stingy person like you, it’d be strange if your heart didn’t straight up stop after paying that much. How could I allow that?”

I was speechless.

.....

She then went over and picked out another couple of clothes. She was not satisfied until the bill was at least 100,000. She then pulled out her card to pay the bill. It was as though she would be very angry if I ended up paying, so I didn’t force it. There was no need after all.

I carried the heavy shopping bags in one hand, while I held Wan Er’s hand in my other and said, “I remember.... At first, you were very unwilling to part with your wallet when you bought that tiger from me. How is it that now, you can pay for a 100,000 bill without batting an eyelash?”

Wan Er grinned, “That’s because, before, my relationship with my dad was a bit tense. I wasn’t even willing to touch the card that he gave me. These past few days together with you, dad’s personality seems to be changing a bit. And so, he’s given me a new card. There’s around nine

digits in it. He said that it's my allowance. I can't even spend it all....”

I rubbed my nose and felt a surge of sorrow, “This is the woe of different social classes... Why haven't my parents given me something like a card? Instead, they left Meng Yao with me, forcing me to work hard and raise her into a successful young woman all by myself...”

“Yea right, wasn't Auntie the one that brought her up!”

“.....”

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After we finished shopping, we returned to our house. Not long after, Meng Yao arrived in Hang Zhou. Without anything to do, I logged onto the game after dinner to see if there was anything to do in the game.

“Shua!”

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Light burst in front of my eyes and I appeared in Tian Ling City. A red tablet appeared on the system interface. When I clicked on it to take a look, I saw that it was all of the military information about the Royal Army. I glanced through it and then quickly summoned my Flying Scythe War Horse. I leapt on and dashed straight towards the camp. My horse was extremely fast and arrived before the gate in minutes. The guards outside recognized me and immediately knelt and greeted, “General!”

I nodded and dashed inside. The system quickly notified me that I needed to go to the drill grounds and supervise the drills for thirty minutes. This was a daily task for the commander.

“Jiu Jiu....”

My Flying Scythe Horse's whinny had alarmed the general at the West Drill Grounds. It was one of the generals in charge of a division—Han Yuan. It was also the man who was known as “Han Beard”. However, among all of the generals of the Royal Army, I admired him the most. He had a candid personality, and was definitely a brave and fierce general on the battlefield!

“My lord commander is here!”

Han Yuan bounded down the steps and raised his broadsword. He knelt before me and said, “Greetings my lord!”

I nodded, “Please rise, there’s no need for any ceremony!”

“Yes my lord!”

Han Yuan stood up. He then looked over at the thousand people who were training behind him and said, “The Blade Shield Camp is currently practicing a defense formation. My lord... are you here to watch?”

I smiled, “I want to understand more about the battle power of the Royal Army. That is within the responsibilities of a commander, is it not?”

Han Yuan was stunned, “My lord, don’t you know.... The past commander General Li Shi didn't even enter the strategy tent, much less examine the drills. He probably only knows how to play with girls and drink his nights away in his own tent.”

I was shocked, “He was that corrupt?”

“There’s more.” Han Yuan clenched his teeth, “There’s women in every tent within the Royal Army, raised only for the sake of being playthings for the noblemen. If my lord doesn’t believe me, you can personally go to the dungeons of Tent 4 to take a look. All of the women are locked up there, living a life worse than pigs and dogs.”

“Oh?”

Without another word I jumped back onto my horse and shouted, “Han Yuan, follow me!”

“Yes my lord!”

Han Yuan lead over a crimson battle horse and followed me to the fourth tent. From a distance, a couple of soldiers raised their spears, “Who comes here?”

Han Yuan quickly raised his sword, “The lord commander is here to inspect the dungeons. Who dares to block his way?”

The soldiers all knelt to the ground. I stopped my battle horse and said, "Take me into the prisons!"

"What?" One of the soldiers revealed an ugly expression and said, "This.... This place is under strict orders from Lord Luo Tei. I'm afraid I cannot obey...."

Angrily, I pulled out my general tablet and roared, "This is the Royal Army, just who is in charge? Immediately open the doors, or else I will inflict martial law and have you killed!"

"Yes... yes my lord...."

The gates to the dungeons opened up. I slid off my horse and walked in with my sword out. Instead of a musty stink, I could smell the scent of perfume and makeup. Instead of savage and brutal criminals locked in the cells, there were several beautiful girls, doing their make up. Some of them were even crying.

I furrowed my brow and said, "What is going on?"

Han Yuan replied, "General, every day after nightfall, there would be an influx of soldiers in this area. All of the women here must serve at least ten men a night. Otherwise, they wouldn't be allowed to sleep. This entire Royal Army has at least a thousand women just like this. They were all servants who were sold into slavery. Some of them were women that we captured after we fought the Barbarian Tribe. But without any exception, they are all pitiful women. They live a life in the shadows without every seeing the sun. Almost every day there's someone who dies. However, these noble soldiers use their pockets full of gold to buy more playthings to fill in the spot. This is the true scent of corruption in the Royal Army Camps!"

My hand shook with anger, "This thing, who's the one in charge, just who allowed this?"

Han Yuan replied, "I don't dare to say!"

"Tell me!"

"Yes my lord...." He hesitated for a moment and said, "This was arranged

by Commander Luo. His father is a Marquis, and so.... As for the man who allowed this, the past commander of the Royal Army was Li Shi, and so he's the one that allowed it. Anyone above that would be Princess Pearl. But, since Princess Pearl is a girl, she's never truly understood the Royal Army, and so I don't expect her to know about this."

I shook with anger, "Those b*st*rds.... Guard!"

A couple of guards arrived, "Yes general?"

I pointed at the cell and said, "Let all of these women out and have them gather at the West Drill Grounds. In addition, gather all of the soldiers there!"

"Yes sir!"

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Chapter 759: Draining the Swamp

Around twenty minutes later, just about everyone had arrived. There were five thousand Royal Army soldiers standing in line at the drill camp. Then, there was another thousand human, elf, and barbarian women standing around with tattered and mussed up clothes. Quite a few were crying out. The soldiers standing on the side roared at them, "Shut up. If you cry any more I will chop you up!" And so, the girls didn't even have the courage to cry. They all knew that these Royal Army soldiers didn't even see them as humans. It would be as easy as killing a bug.

.....

I stood on the podium, my hand on the hilt of my sword. Generals Han Yuan, Shu Lie, and Luo Te were all standing behind me. They were all in charge of large divisions of at least a thousand men. The soldiers were lined up in five rows. Of them, Han Yuan's and Shu Lie's soldiers were at least relatively in line and organized, while the others couldn't even be called rows. Some of the soldiers weren't even dressed properly, with the attitude of a prince.

"General, why have you brought all of these slaves over?" The soft princeling general Luo Te asked with a stunned voice.

I coldly laughed, "Is there not a stipulation in the Tian Ling City military that forbids keeping women in the military camps?"

"Well, there is...."

Luo Te stuck his chest out and confidently smiled, "But, there's also the unwritten rule. Whenever an army overtakes another city, they can bring all of the spoils of war back to the camp. This is a rule that has always existed in the Royal Army. Without women, we wouldn't have the strength to battle. General, you are a man too. You should understand that, right?"

Rage boiled in my stomach. I did everything I could to remain calm, "Violating a law in any way is violating the law. Where did all of these unwritten rules pop up from? The law is ironclad. Do you not understand a rule as simple as that?"

On the side, Han Yuan added, "Keeping women in the camps is already a preposterous thing. What do you mean, you don't have the strength to fight without women? From what I can see, you guys have actually turned into shell less crabs when these women came!"

Luo Te was now pissed. He pointed right at Han Yuan and roared, "Han Beard, just what right do you have to f*cking accuse me? Do not forget, you are just a plebeian. If you didn't have the muscles, what makes you think you could climb to that general position? Oh, I know, you don't have any gold in that patched up wallet of yours. You probably haven't even touched a women before, or tasted the sweetness of a girl, isn't that right? Alright then, I'm feeling a little generous today. I'll send one or two women over so that you can experience it. Are you satisfied now?"

Han Yuan's face grew red with anger, "Shut the f*ck up you stuck up ss, I have never once touched those women. I, Han Yuan, joined the army so that I may bring honor to the empire. I came to achieve a successful career and become a hero. I'm not some useless bst*rd like you who relies on his daddy to join the Royal Army and runs away at the sight of fighting!"

Luo Te pulled out his sword and shouted, "Han Yuan, you're just asking for it now!"

Deputy General Song roared, "What are you two thinking of doing?"

I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword. "Keng!" I knocked away Han Yuan and Luo Te's swords and said, "You too are being a little too disrespectful to me, are you not?"

Han Yuan quickly knelt to the ground, "I am sorry, Commander, please forgive me!"

Luo Te hesitated for a moment and also knelt down.

I didn't say anything to them. I raised my sword and looked over at the 6000 people on the ground. I then addressed them, "Today, I, Li Xiao Yao, as the Commander of the Royal Army, have orders for you. I am immediately abolishing the rule of keeping women in the camp. If anyone dares to keep women, they will be executed on the spot!"

Luo Te's eyes widened, "General, you cannot do that! This is a rule that the Royal Army has always followed. You cannot abolish it so easily!"

I coldly laughed, "The rules of the Royal Army will be set by me from now on. Just when was it stipulated by you?"

As I said that, I looked over at Deputy General Song and said, "How much gold is in the military treasury?"

Deputy General Song replied, "Reporting to my lord, there's over 10,000 Gold."

I nodded, "Release these thousand women and give each of them ten gold. Let them out and find a good man to marry in the city or go back to their homes. No one is allowed to determine where they go. Whoever dares to do so will be executed on the spot!"

Deputy General Song smiled and shouted, "Yes sir! However, general, if you do this, the treasury will be emptied. What should we do?"

"No matter, Princess Pearl will help us find funds."

"Yes, my general is wise!"

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System Notification: Congratulations, you have successfully established new rules in the military. Achievements+150!

This.... Even though I'm not sure what this Achievements is, it probably has something to do with a player's standing in the NPC army? Either way, the more the better....

All of the women on the drill grounds were released. One after another, they charged towards the tents and didn't even say a thanks to the person who released them all. It was probably because they have suffered too much here in the army and so they see all of us to be fearsome and terrifying.

Han Yuan knelt before me and gave me a thousand thanks, "My lord will spearhead a new age in the Royal Army!"

Luo Te coldly smiled, "Kiss *ss!"

I also coldly smiled and looked at Luo Te and said, “Luo Te, if my memory serves me right, the person who set up the rule to keep women in the military camp was you, is that right?”

Luo Te was stunned and said, “Yes, what of it?”

I opened my hand and pointed at the gates of the camp and said, “Based on the law of the military, anyone who treats human lives like grass deserves death! But, that is the past. Plus, you are the son of a marquis, I have no right to execute you. But, there is no place for you in the Royal Army any longer. You are no longer one of our members. I suggest that you find another job. The Royal Army will not feed any more useless bags of sh*t.”

Lu Te was stunned, “Li Xiao Yao! You... just what are you to say that? Don’t think that just because you have Princess Pearl supporting you that you can be so arrogant! Let me tell you, I Luo Te will not leave. No matter what, I will not leave!”

Han Yuan lowered his voice and said in my ear, “Princelings like him are in the army are here just for the name and then use it as a stepping stone for a better job. Right now, he’s just a small supervisor. If he leaves, there’s no way he can face his Marquis father. That’s why he doesn’t want to leave....”

I smiled, “Guards, bring Supervisor Luo Te’s horse and see him out!”

Luo Te leapt onto his horse and pulled out his sword, shouting, “Li Xiao Yao, you dare chase me out?”

I shouted my orders, “Archers, prepare!”

Han Yuan raised his hand, having his archers all target Luo Te. With a single command, I could turn that son of a marquis into a porcupine.

Furious, Luo Te clenched his teeth and said, “You.....you, you’re all ganging up on me! Just you wait, one day I will show you guys! Everyone who thinks of me as their friend in the Royal Army, follow me. It doesn’t matter, we just won’t stay in this Royal Army! Let’s go to the Xia Yu Army, to the Flame Dragon Army. Any army is better than the Royal Army!

Either way we can find success there!”

At that moment, some of the soldiers in line began to murmur and leave their positions. Soon, around five hundred of them had left. They were probably all close friends to Luo Te.

Han Yuan and Shu Lie both pulled out their weapons and roared, “Whoever dares to desert will be executed!”

I raised my hand and said, “No, let them go. Right now, the Royal Army needs brave warriors, not cowards! Let them go. We can recruit new soldiers, recruit true warriors!”

Han Yuan put away his broadsword. Admiration was practically gushing from his eyes as he smiled, “Yes sir! From this point, the Royal Army has drained its swamp and been reborn!”

In the end, Luo Te took his group of soldiers and left while I received another 150 points in Achievements. Motherf*cker, I’m starting to think that if I keep this up, I might eventually get promoted?

.....

I could see a light shine in Xiao Lie’s sole eye as he smiled, “My Lord, from my knowledge, Tian Ling City’s Warrior Academy is just about to send out a new wave of graduates. All of the great armies of the empire are going to fight for recruits. Our Royal Army happens to need new recruits now too. We should not pass up this rare opportunity. How about, you go and ask Princess Pearl about this, and ask for her permission to pick some new recruits from the graduating class?”

I nodded, “Alright. You and Han Yuan follow me to meet Princess Pearl!”

“Yes sir!”

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“What? You want to recruit people from the Battle Academy? Princess Pearl was holding a cup of tea as she looked at me with shock.

I nodded, “Yes. I had just dismissed a thousand innocent women in the army, and then chased out 500 of the noblemen in the Royal Army. Right

now, the Royal Army only has around four thousand people. We need to replenish people on all levels of rank. The new graduates of the Battle Academy are just the people that we need. I hope that your highness will allow this.”

Pearl seemed a little hesitant, “But... the new graduates from Battle Academy, those are also people that my brothers are seeking for. I...”

I smiled, “It’s no problem, your highness just needs to act a little spoiled to your brothers. I’m sure they will give you some leeway....”

“Pu....”

Pearl couldn’t help but laugh. She stood up and slipped her snow white battle cloak onto her shoulders and said, “Alright then, I’m going to go and act spoiled. You guys wait here for my news. I will do my best!”

“Yes, your highness!”

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Around thirty minutes later, Princess Pearl finally returned with her body guards. She had a satisfied and proud look on her face, “I have succeeded! The Crown Prince and the Second Prince have both agreed. Tomorrow, the Royal Army can recruit people from the graduates. However, it cannot surpass five hundred. Is that ok?”

I nodded, “That is enough!”

“Ok. Then you guys work hard and supervise the matters of the Royal Army!” Pearl stared deeply at me and smiled, “I will rely on you to make sure that my army will be able to protect this capital!”

I replied, “I won’t let you down!”

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Chapter 760: Selecting the Best

The next day, I went to visit Meng Yao and Auntie in the morning. I then ate lunch with Wan er and Dong Cheng before logging on again. Today was an important day, I needed to prepare for selecting our new recruits from the Battle Academy. I now understood three very important factors to this game, Besides training myself and becoming stronger, I needed to focus on developing the Dragon's Den, strengthening [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army. If I want to create a place for myself in this chaotic world, the reality was that I needed a strong enough military in order to do so. Otherwise, I'll actually be spending my time here living carefreely as I tour the mountains and rivers. It was just as Fang Ge Que had said, living in the martial world inherently pushes us forward, no matter what it was that we initially set forth to do. Under the pressure of the continuous internal conflicts and enemy countries, [Zhan Long] could no longer retreat safely. All we could do was push forward.

The Dragon's Den was already starting to look like a major Level 10 city. It was also the first player fort to reach Level 10 in the entire Tian Ling City. On top of that, I had already recruited all 5000 Flame Eagle Archers. The Dragon's Den Eagle Nest was filled to the brim with these archers. Their stats were 110% of mine. Once this group of Flame Eagle Archers descends, I'm afraid that they will shock the entire continent!

[Zhan Long] has had Wan Er, Li Mu, Qing Qian, and Matcha, these four pillars from its start. Right now, my priority was to reorganize this Royal Army. Once it becomes a strong army, then [Zhan Long] will have true mountain for support and my words will carry much more weight.

“Shua!”

I logged on and appeared in Tian Ling City. As usual, I could hear a crowd of players shouting and haggling at the stands. As the game progressed to now, a large amount of the high level materials were being sold. Furthermore, the players in silent agreement had already split the plaza into different districts. The Northern Plaza was the Materials District, while the Southern Plaza was the Finished Goods District. East

was for equipments while West was for pets. The Western plaza had several players who sold countless pet materials and mount sealing crystals. There were experts throughout Tian Ling City who had countless breathtaking pets and equipment. If you only paid attention to your own equipment and felt satisfied, then it was equivalent to sitting in a well and imagining that to be the world. Of course, my Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword were truly the highest tier in stats.

I summoned my Flying Scythe War Horse and leapt onto its saddle, and galloped straight towards the Royal Army Camp. Right as I entered, I saw Han Yuan and Xiao Lie the two generals. They had just lead the cavalry out of the camp. They all stopped before me to greet me, "General, we're all ready to set off to the Battle Academy at a moment's notice. We've prepared everything just as you had wanted. There's a total of two hundred with me, and they are all elites in battle and drills!"

I nodded, "Good, let's go then. Han Yuan, lead the team. We're heading to Battle Academy!"

"Yes, general!"

Han Yuan's face was red with excitement. He was a commoner general and had fought his way up to this position. Yet, every day, he felt his heart squeeze as he watched the corruption in the army slowly kill it. And now that I had come, this army was entering a new age. Thus, Han Yuan's excitement was understandable.

I myself couldn't find the Battle Academy and it wasn't until everyone left the city did I realize that the Battle Academy wasn't within the city.

Xiao Lie smiled, "General, Battle Academy is the top military academy in the empire. It's also where most of our young generals come from. Furthermore, there are hidden dragons and crouching tigers in that academy. Several of our most famous generals had all gotten their start there. Every year, the most elite graduates were all taken by the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army. The other armies could only fight over the remaining ones. This opportunity to be the first to select recruits is a rare chance!"

I nodded, “Yup, that’s good!”

Our group entered Gale Forest, and headed due east. Once we passed through it, we happened upon a ranch. I was surprised to see a group of young students who were engaged in combat with wooden spears. There was around a hundred of them, each wearing a deep navy blue uniform. They were all very focused. These people were very different from the NPC army that I had seen before, both in terms of personality and strength. No wonder Crown Prince Theodore was able to push Ignaus and Lanais back. Tian Ling City’s most elite army’s battle power was not an empty name.

Han Yuan looked into the distance and smiled, “The army candidates are in the middle of training. General, what do you think?”

I cheerfully said, “Very good. Just where is the Battle Academy?”

“Beside the Forest of Monuments.”

“The Forest of Monuments?”

“Yup!” Han Yuan explained when he saw my puzzled look, “The Forest of Imperial Steles is where all of the brave souls of Tian Ling City are buried. There’s an enormous Zhen Guo Monument where the names of all warriors who lost their lives in combat is carved into. The original stone was already covered with names, and so the later monarchs all founded new monuments, creating this forest. The Battle Academy was founded right beside it, for that reason. It allows the students to feel the brave spirits so that they may summon their own courage and fight for the country!”

I nodded, without saying anything.

Not long after, I saw large monuments in the forest in front of me. Some were ten meters tall, towering over us like a black stone wall. There were around a hundred of them. As they had said, it could truly be called a forest of monuments. There were several guards posted around the forest. They were the men in charge of guarding these monuments, and yet none appeared very happy to be doing this hard work. None of them had a smile, nor did they say anything when they saw us.

“We’re here!”

Han Yuan pointed to the east at a majestic fort. It was the Battle Academy. The surrounding wall was made up of tall sharp wooden pikes. It had a terrifying aura. Outside of the academy was a number of drill grounds, at least fifty of them. They looked like separate basketball courts. Teams of students were lined up in rows, in the middle of studying formations.

We walked straight into the academy, only to see a sea of people in the distance. Were those all of the graduates?

Xiao Lie seemed to see my hesitation and smiled, “General, there’s a set number of students in the Battle Academy. Every year, they only take ten thousand students. They must graduate in four years, and there’s a total of 40,000 throughout the academy. And so, we’ll pick out 500 from the graduates, that way, it wouldn’t even tickle the Flame Dragon and Xia Yu Army.”

I smiled, “Let’s go!”

“Yes sir!”

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We walked into the drill grounds. At that moment, all of the students look over at us, their eyes filled with admiration and envy. They entered the Battle Academy for the sake of fighting for the country. Of course they admired the soldiers here who were already in the army.

I pulled out my general’s tablet and said to the military instructors, “I’m the commander of the Royal Army, General Li Xiao Yao. This is my tablet. I am here under orders from Princess Pearl to select recruits.”

One of the military instructors was carrying a battle axe and nodded, “General Li, do as you please. The roll is right here. Pick your candidates!”

I handed the roll to Han Yuan and Xiao Lie. These two were better at this. Since I, the commander, am someone who lives in the real life, I wasn’t too familiar with the details of this type of combat. And so, handing it to them was a bit better. If I want to be a good commander, I

need to know how to use people.

Xiao Lie raised the register and stood on the stage, “Top twenty students in cavalry, line up behind me to receive a badge. From today on, you are soldiers of the Royal Army!”

At that moment, the crowd began to murmur. One determined graduate walked up and said, “We joined the army so that we can lead an impressive career, not so that we can join some princeling army like the Royal Army. I’d rather fight the Hybrid Demons than join the Royal Army!”

Xiao Lie coldly smiled, “You must be the top cavalry student Leng Xiao? Haha, well if you want to fight the Hybrid Demons, your hopes and dreams might actually come true. Let me tell you, the current Royal Army is no longer the past Royal Army. Our mission isn’t to just protect the safety of the capital, we have another mission as well. That is to go to Dragon City and patrol the Hybrid Demon Territory border. How about it, do you have the guts to join the Royal Army?”

That graduate stiffened and smiled with a gripped fist, “If that’s the case, I am willing to join!”

In the end, the students reactions were all very unenthusiastic. Do all of these kids want to go and fight the Hybrid Demons? I smiled, maybe, when they actually meet the Hybrid Demons and see the countless Grave Digger Demons and Magic Sword Masters, they won’t want to go to Dragon City any longer. The Hybrid Demons will have become a nightmare in their hearts. However, if they could fight past that, they will definitely become diamonds in the rough.

Xiao Lie raised the roll and continued, “Top twenty swordsmen, come and receive your badge from the Royal Army. From now on, you are a member of the Royal Army!”

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Very soon, we finished our selection. We had embraced all five hundred of the new recruits. When faced with these five hundred youngsters filled with hopes and naivete, I, at twenty five years old, could already be

considered a veteran of a hundred battles. I couldn't help but feel some nostalgia and pride, "I am the commander of the royal Army Li Xiao Yao. I cannot promise you that once you join the army, you will become a famous general, or an idol that everyone chases after. But, I can promise to you, that you will get the chance to battle the Hybrid Demons, and that you will have the chance to protect the country! The Royal Army is no longer a princeling army, starting with you! No matter what your previous achievements or backgrounds are, you five hundred will be starting on the same level. All of your promotions and advancements will depend on your achievements from this point forward. The Royal Army is no longer a place where people rely on their connections to advance!"

All five hundred of the new recruits looked at me quietly for a good half minute. Finally, they all pumped their fists, "Long live the Royal Army!"

Chapter 761: Brilliant & Strong

“Brother Xiao Yao, what have you been up to these past few days? I haven’t even seen around the guild these days...” Wolf suddenly asked in the guild chat.

I was in the middle of reviewing the drills for the cavalry in the camp. I smiled and said in the core guild chat, “Remember that quest I received earlier? These days I’ve been busy organizing the NPC Royal Army...”

Wan Er grinned, “Our pig seems to have become addicted to the military career...”

Wang Jian said, “Brother Xiao Yao was originally a man of the military, so naturally he would relate and feel comfortable in the military. Vice guildmaster Wan Er, you’re going to have to hurry, don’t let Xiao Yao get lonely and join the army again...”

Qing Qian giggled, “Exactly. Cang Tong, you have to watch him closely. Besides, once Brother Xiao Yao decides to join the army, based on his performance and reputation in [Destiny], he’ll definitely become an idol in the army. At that point, he’ll probably have the hearts of all the female soldiers. I heard that they are particularly fiery. Sister Cang Tong, you...”

Wan Er's voice quavered in mock fear as she exclaimed, “Eh, this... I will definitely keep a tight leash on him!”

Li Mu then said, “Guildmaster, what do you think of the Royal Army now?”

I grunted and said, “Last time you guys saw the fight at Dragon City. The NPCs didn’t stand a chance against the Hybrid Demons. I figured that there was a reason for that. The structure of the army is terrible and the morale is low. Ba Huang City’s entire army’s battle power combined isn’t comparable to the Flame Dragon Army or the Xia Yu Army. The Royal Army’s battle power, if I’m going to be honest, just three days ago, was also terribly weak. Just using a hundred man team of the Steel Blade Army from [Zhan Long] would be enough to destroy them. However, after the changes I’ve enacted, a two thousand man army from [Zhan Long]’s Steel

Blade Cavalry may not even be enough to rival them. As long as I continue strengthening the army and supervising their training, I believe that not long after, we'll turn them into a truly fearsome power. Furthermore, this army follows my orders. That is incredibly important for [Zhan Long] and the country..."

"They listen to your orders..." Li Mu was getting excited, "He he, with guildmaster's military strategy and tactics, as well as the absolute control over the Royal Army, I'm afraid that the NPC army will become the winning factor for all internal and country battles?"

I nodded, "On top of that, Princess Pearl has given me consent to expand the Royal Army to 20,000 soldiers. I've been training these NPCs every day, strengthening their level and stats. In the future, their battle power will exceed that of the top tier players. At that point, their battle power will truly be terrifying."

One Second Hero laughed, "Guildmaster is impressive! You've got the muscles and the brains to unify the martial world!"

I was speechless, "I've never thought of unifying the world. I just don't want this army to turn into cannon fodder. Besides, most of the NPC armies are cannon fodder. The NPC generals aren't good at leading the army at all!"

Dong Cheng smiled mischievously, "If the NPC Generals were on the same level as famous generals, do you think that there would be any point for players? We'd be KOed by the NPCs!"

I thought about it for a moment and agreed, "That's right. This also goes to show just how much this game has been designed for humans. They actually even thought about catering to the average level of intelligence in players..."

Wan Er smiled, "I'm just looking forward to seeing an NPC who's smarter than the players, that'll definitely be interesting!"

Qing Qian said, "I'm afraid that that's not realistic. You're just going to have to wait for the next book."

Wan Er was speechless.

I laughed, "Alright, I'm not gonna chat with you guys any longer. I'm going to go train the cavalry and archers of the Royal Army!"

Wolf said, "Brother Xiao Yao, aren't you afraid of falling behind in levels if you focus so much on the army?"

I confidently smiled, "Have you seen someone who has a higher level than me? Don't worry, as I train and change the Royal Army, my experience goes up too. If I'm lucky, I'll also get more Achievement Points. I definitely won't fall behind in terms of leveling up."

"Ok!"

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I closed out of the communications interface and continued roaming the drill station. I inspected the Cavalry Archers and Swordsmen training. Han Yuan was training a group of shield carrying soldiers in the shield formation. The Royal Army's soldiers were very complete and diverse. We had everything from cavalry to archers, and even shield bearers. Our battle power shouldn't be too bad at the end of this training.

Xiao Lie lead his horse over and asked, "My lord, do you want to head over to the recruiting tent? Lately a group of nomadic barbarian tribes passed through Tian Ling City. There's quite a few of them, and we can pick out some to recruit!"

"Alright, then let's head over!"

"Ok! I'll show you the way!"

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I followed Xiao Lie out of the camp. Twenty soldiers followed behind me. They were all personal guards that I had arranged. They would follow me around everywhere, at least within the camp. Whatever, doesn't matter if they follow me. After all, I wasn't hiding anything in the game. If it happened in real life and they followed behind us while Wan Er and I were shopping, then I'd have to teach them a lesson....

After we left the Eastern Gate, we saw a group of tents on the border of the forest outside of the city. It appeared that the nomadic Barbarians were staying there. They were all extremely buff and burly men. Xiao Lie smiled, "These barbarians come from the Giant Demon Forest. Their homes were destroyed by a pack of wolves, so they had no choice but to become nomadic. After they arrived in Tian Ling City, they were practically living like beggars. These idiots were originally planning on using their strength to loot a village, but the crown prince sent out an army of five thousand to stop them. Now they had become much more obedient..."

As he said that, Xiao Lie had a look of pity, "These pitiful b*st*rds, in order to clothe and feed their wives, they're practically willing to give their lives."

I furrowed my brow and said, "Last time, how many supplies was Princess Pearl able to get for us?"

Xiao Lie said, "Princess Pearl was very generous and gave us 300,000 Gold as well as 700 horses from Tibet. Our rations are even more plentiful. Right now, our Royal Army is practically dripping in riches. My Lord, what do you think?"

I pursed my lips and said, "That's simple. Let's set up a space outside of Tian Ling City in the Gale Forest. Have any soldiers who aren't training cut down the trees to create houses and clear the area for cultivation. We'll help the Barbarians find a place to live. This way, their men can work for the empire. Not only will Tian Ling City gain more people, these Barbarians can also fight for the empire. It's killing two birds with one stone."

Xiao Lie got excited, "Ok!...I would never have imagined this. My lord, please wait a moment, I will ask Princess Pearl about this now!"

"Ok!"

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I stood outside the Barbarian Camp for a moment as Xiao Lie quickly dashed off. He ran back with a report, "Her Highness has agreed. She's

also asked his majesty. These Barbarians can live outside of Tian Ling City, but they cannot make any trouble for our citizens.”

I smiled, “Don’t worry. As long as we feed and clothe them, and give their soldiers a salary, I’m sure that they will peacefully live as citizens of Tian Ling City.”

“My lord, that’s brilliant!”

This time, Xiao Lie truly meant his praise. I could see the happiness on his face. This b*st*rd had been through everything on the battlefield, which was why one of his eyes was gone. However, he was truly a hot blooded person. It was that way against the Hybrid Demons, and it was that way in other matters as well. This kind of person was one of the bravest among the warriors that fought to protect their homes.

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Xiao Lie raised the scroll carrying Princess Pearl’s orders and immediately left. A group of Royal Army soldiers shouted to the barbarians, “Her highness has orders. All male barbarians between the ages of 15 and 50 may join the Royal Army to become soldiers. Their relatives will be taken care of and a house will be built outside Tian Ling City for them, complete with cultivated fields and 2 gold every month!”

At that moment, the Barbarian Camp started to get excited. A group of strong barbarians all shouted, “I want to join! I want to join!”

Xiao Lie was satisfied, “If you want to join, line up and register with me. Hurry!”

Soon after, the Royal Army’s recruiting tent was practically stampeded. Xiao Lie couldn’t help but shake his head, “D*mn, before when we tried to recruit them, they barely batted an eye, and now they’re fighting to get in... My lord is really clever. Her Highness’ decision to put you in the Royal Army was practically a godsend!”

I was speechless.

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In the afternoon, the Barbarian Tribe's Recruitment Camp finally quieted down. There was around 27,000 people in this tribe, and settling them outside of Tian Ling City was not a problem. Of them, five thousand volunteered to join the Royal Army. Like this, we could finally settle these almost 30,000 people.

And so, that day, the empire's iron smiths were overwhelmed with work. The Barbarians were much more buff than humans. The armor that they wore and the broadswords that they wielded were much different. Furthermore, the Barbarians were too heavy. They weighed around 300 pounds. There was no way the battle horses could hold up their weight, making it so that they could never become cavalry. However, they were very good at wielding battle axes, long swords and shields, and were great foot soldiers. Once they charged together, they were like a moving fort. With their heavy shields, even if they were up against cavalry, they wouldn't necessarily be broken through."

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In the blink of an eye, another day passed. I didn't have any plans for the New Year's Eve, so I logged onto the game and continued training the Royal Army. Under my supervision, the army's attack power and defense power were finally becoming superior as a result. The originally Level 110 Thunder Tier NPC soldiers were now around Level 130-140 Titan Tier soldiers. They had a base strength that was the same as the Hybrid Demons. Next up was gaining real experience.

That evening, I received a report. A small team of Hybrid Demons were attacking Dragon City and they needed reinforcements. Princess Pearl gave me the order to take a team from the Royal Army and head out. Just in time!

Chapter 762: Snow Dragon Knight

“General, Dragon City is asking for help?” Han Yuan was getting excited, “Is it finally time for our Royal Army to act?”

I nodded, “Immediately get Her Highness Princess Pearl’s command. Once we get the scroll, we’ll set out!”

“Yes sir!”

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Han Yuan galloped off. In less than twenty minutes, he returned, holding a shining tablet with a smile, “Her highness already had the command prepared. General, when do we set out? How many men are we bringing?”

I methodically said, “Two thousand cavalry from the first and second camp. In addition, the fifth, sixth, and seventh camps’ foot soldiers. Well set out posthaste. Vice General Song is responsible for escorting the army provisions. When we reach Dragon City, I will ask Frost for a chance to allow the Royal Army to display its might. This battle will be the first after we reorganized the military. We cannot afford defeat!”

“Yes sir!”

On the Royal Army drill grounds, soldiers were gathered and lined up in straight rows. They were the elite of the Royal Army. Of them, two thousand were cavalymen coming from the equestrian grounds. The other three thousand were barbarians who made up our Shield Formation. For the moment, these were the elite troops of our ten thousand soldiers.

After we conducted roll call, I leapt onto my Flying Scythe Horse and pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and roared, “Set out for Dragon City!”

A group of Royal Army cavalymen all charged out. One after another, their hooves beat the ground, raising a storm of dust. Two thousand cavalymen rushed forward. Behind them, a group of barbarians stampeded forward. They were fighting because the Hybrid Demons had invaded their homes. To be honest, they were like the humans, and had a

strong sense of protecting their homes.

Five thousand men and horses brought three days worth of rations out of Tian Ling City and aimed straight for Zi Wu Mountain. After we passed over the mountain, the distance between us and the supply wagons pulled further and further apart. We had no way of knowing just how urgent the situation in Dragon City was. Either way, the sooner we arrived, the better.

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Just as I was leading the Royal Army forward, I heard Li Mu's voice in the guild chat, "Have you seen it yet? The new update will be ready in five hours. On top of that, they aren't going to kick anyone off. They're just directly updating it!"

Wan Er exclaimed, "Oh?"

I stiffened as I asked, "What's the update?"

Li Mu replied, "The update is called 'The World's Armies.' The details explain that players can choose between two arrangements. One is to continue staying as an adventurer, which is similar to mercenaries, whereas the other is to join an army. Tian Ling City, Ba Huang City, Jiu Li City, and Fan Shu City have a total of thirty established armies. You can join any one of them. Furthermore, players can earn promotions through Achievements and make their way up the ladder. Players can fill any position, from Team Leader to Corporal Lieutenant, all the way to General, Commander, and Commander in Chief. In addition, after joining the army, players can receive a wage and rations every day. We know for the moment that the rations and wages include gold, potions and other replenishing types of medicines. Otherwise, there's also minerals and herbs."

Wolf was stunned, "D*mn, this update is really interesting. Players can actually become Commander in Chiefs?"

Li Mu chuckled, "Who knows? I only glanced through the forums. You can look at the details yourself. Tian Ling City has a variety of different options to choose from. There's the Flame Dragon Army, the Xia Yua Army, and the Fierce Gale army. Oh wait that's not right, wait... D*mn,

why isn't guildmaster's Royal Army among the options?"

Qing Qian replied, "Eh, let me check. There really isn't Brother Xiao Yao's Royal Army. What's going on?"

Wan Er smiled, "Maybe there's a reason for that. Li Xiao Yao managed to jump to Commander through Princess Pearl's recommendation. In other words, he has the same rank as a Deputy General. That's normally a position that players must spend a lot of time in order to achieve. And so, the Royal Army is an exception that normal players cannot enter..."

Li Mu asked, "Guildmaster, do you think [Zhan Long] should join the ranks?"

I nodded, "If it's necessary, then we should. Either way, we can receive rations. There's no reason to turn that down. There shouldn't be too much that the NPC army wants us to do, right?"

Li Mu replied, "Yup. All we gotta do is the daily tasks. Those can be completed in minutes, unlike your commander position. You're so busy that we only ever see you maybe twice a month."

I smiled, "That's good. Everyone pick an army that looks like it has a bright future. It's best if everyone from [Zhan Long] joins the same army."

"Yes sir!"

Wan Er smiled at the ground, "I saw it..."

"What'd you see?"

"Of the different army camps that you can join, one of them is lead by Frost in Dragon City. There's a lot of concrete details regarding that too..." She stopped for a moment and then continued, "in Dragon City, there are around 7254 soldiers in the army. There's a total of 5428 horse tamers and ironsmiths. There are seven commanders in the army, and they have a battle power of 73661!"

"This..." Li Mu was stunned, "Dragon City is very strong!"

I smiled, "What makes you say that?"

Li Mu replied, "Tian Ling City's strongest army, the Flame Dragon Army

has a total of 140,000 people. Their battle power strength is over 110,000. Dragon City only has ten thousand people and yet their battle power isn't must lower than the Flame Dragon Army. In other words, Dragon City's ten thousand people is enough to take on the 140,000 in the Flame Dragon Army. If that isn't strength, then what is?"

I smiled, "Then how about this, when the update is open, [Zhan Long] should immediately head to Dragon City. Although, I estimate that the rations from Dragon City won't be as good as that from the main city's armies."

Qing Qian smiled, "Brother Xiao Yao is right. The Dragon City's rations and wages are barely 30% of the main city's. I'm thinking that the number of people who will want to join Dragon City won't be very many?"

I replied, "That's fine. After a few more battles, Dragon City can enter the Northern Territories and we'll be able to plunder the resources from the Hybrid Demon Territory. Then we'll get money through there. There's no need to worry about our rations, we gotta think about the long run."

"Ok!" Qing Qian replied, "Dragon City has a recruiting limit, only a total of 20,000 can join."

I replied, "That's about right. We have around 20,000 people in [Zhan Long]'s core players. That's enough. The rest can just join the Flame Dragon Army or the Xia Yu Army."

"Alright, I got it. I'll go and get everything organized."

"Melon, thanks for your hard work!"

"Isn't it all because I like Brother Xiao Yao too much?"

I was speechless.

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After an hour, we arrived at Dragon City. I looked up and saw that a smoke signal was rising above the city. Looks like the battle was becoming more intense. Not far away, I suddenly heard the sounds of hooves beating the ground. It was the army from Ba Huang City. There was a young

General leading the team. They sped along while shouting, “Princess Angela has sent orders, we must reach Dragon City with the utmost of haste and hand these supplies to Lady Frost!”

“Yes sir!”

The team didn’t even glance at us before passing by. There was around five hundred of them, all cavalrymen. However, all of them were carrying bundles of arrows. Looks like they were sending emergency supplies.

Han Yuan raised his broadsword and charged ahead. He turned around to look at me, with a cold glare in his eyes, “General, it looks like the situation isn’t great. What should we do?”

I lowered my voice and said, “Same orders. I’ll go up and see what’s going on. Wait up for me!”

“Yes sir!”

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The cavalry charged straight up the slope towards Dragon City. This slope was like a bridge to heaven, and had just finished construction. It connected the extremely high altitude Dragon City with the flat lands, making transportation much easier. Of course, this also lowered Dragon City’s defenses to the seven kingdoms that were south of it.

“Jiu jiu...”

We charged up to the city. My Flying Scythe Horse’s iron hooves rhythmically beat against the paved roads. From afar, I could see smoke rising from the northern section of Dragon City. A large number of NPC soldiers were gathered around the wall, letting loose an array of defense mechanisms such as arrows and boulders. The archers were shouting to one another. I could see large puddles of blood on the ground. A pile of soldier bodies were already building up. Looks like the Hybrid Demons had already killed their way onto the wall.

I could see a lone figure standing on the observation deck. Frost was fully dressed in armor, her arms crossed over her chest as the bitter winter breeze brushed past her cloak. She had the pose of a queen. Furthermore,

the Severing Beauty sword flashed as it spun through the hoards of Hybrid Demons, cutting them apart.

I leapt off my horse and bounded towards the observation deck. When my boots hit the snow, Frost turned around with a smile, “Li Xiao Yao, you came.”

I nodded, “Yup, I’m here now!”

Frost smiled, “Well, this time, you seem stronger than before!”

“Not bad...” I modestly smiled, “How’s the situation?”

Frost said, “The Son of the Storm, Gwaine, and the Blood Giant Kehl have joined forces and are attacking. For the moment, I’ve only seen Gwaine’s troops, and it’s already too much for me to bear. We’re suffering great losses. Healers, medics, and ranged fighters are all scarce in supply. To top it off, these Hybrid Demons have incredibly strong charge. Our heavy shields keep breaking when they charge at full force.”

I shuddered, “Will Dragon City fall into enemy hands?”

Frost wryly smiled, “Don’t worry, it shouldn’t.”

“Where’s all your confidence coming from?”

“Them....”

Frost looked up at the sky. I followed her gaze. Past the thick snowflakes and grey clouds, the screech of dragons thundered in the sky, shaking the ground. A Crystal Dragon descended from the sky, its body was enormous and I saw a beautiful knight riding on its back. It was the Dragon Knights Squad Leader, Qing Luo. With a single command from Qing Luo, the Crystal Dragon opened its enormous jaws, spraying its Crystal Dragon Breath at the border of the city. At that moment, an entire group of Magic Sword Masters were shot to death by the crystals. Right after that, another four fire dragons descended, dealing an air strike. With a Flame Dragon Breath, the Hybrid Demon Army was enveloped in a sea of fire.

I was stupefied. Dragon Knights. The epitome of mount type classes. That destructive power was just too terrifying!

Chapter 763: The Royal Army'S First

“How is it? Not bad right?” Frost smiled as she watched my face.

I nodded, “Yup, it’s the legendary Dragon Knights... they truly do give a different effect.... That’s right Frost. Why don’t you have a mount?”

Frost looked at me and murmured, “If there were enough dragons, I would want one too, however.... Nevermind. I already have the strength of a Vice God, which gives me the power to fly. How about we leave the dragon mounts to the other soldiers!?”

“Right now, how many Dragon Mounts are there?”

“Including Qing Luo’s, there’s fifteen. The other ten Dragon Knights are currently on standby. They’ll only be used when the situation is dangerous. Otherwise, there’s no need to show off their power.”

Frost’s eyes looked into the distance darkness with a smile on her lips, “I really hope that Gwaine has the guts to appear!”

I felt my heart shudder, “You want to kill him?”

Frost grinned, “There are currently fourteen Hybrid Demon Kings alive; killing one means one less.”

I was speechless.

Right at that moment, one of the soldiers carrying a halberd rushed over. He knelt before us and said, “Lady Frost, the eastern mountain has pressing news. Just outside the Dragon Graveyard, the Blood Giant Kehl is commanding a group of Earth Giants to break through the defense line. We have less than 200 people there. I’m afraid that we’re going to lose the Dragon Graveyard. We need reinforcements!”

Frost stiffened, “The Blood Giant Kehl is attacking the Dragon Graveyard? D*mm*t, why didn’t I think of that!?”

I quickly volunteered, “Teacher, I’ve already taken up the position as the commander of the Tian Ling City Royal Army. This time, I’ve brought five thousand men here. If needed, we are ready for the task.”

Frost raised her elegant brow and said, "The Royal Army's battle power has never been much to boast about. Plus, it's known as the Princeling Corps. Are you sure that their legs won't turn to jelly when they see the fearsome Blood Giants?"

"No!" I confidently smiled, "The Royal Army is no longer the army it was before. Have three Dragon Knights help me stabilize the formation. I'll lead our troops to the Dragon Graveyard and push back those Earth Giants!"

Frost smiled, "Alright!"

As she said that, she shouted to the sky, "Qing Luo, come here!"

Among the cloudy skies, a dragon screech pierced through the air. Qing Luo and her Crystal Dragon flew down and landed by the observation deck. She smiled, "My lady, I'm here. What orders do you have? Ah... General Dragon Knight has come back as well? Congratulations, I heard that you've taken up the position as a commander. Feeling powerful now?"

I was speechless.

Frost replied, "Qing Luo, can you take two Silver Dragon Knights to go with Li Xiao Yao to the Dragon Graveyard? Follow all of his commands!"

Qing Luo nodded, "Yes my lady!"

She then shouted to the distance, "Xin Jia, Yu Ping, we have new orders! Come over here!"

In the distant city, two silver figures flashed through the air. I saw that the two knights riding on their backs were young soldiers. They each carried a dragon lance in their hands.

"Charge with me!"

"Yes my lady!"

.....

I bid farewell to Frost and immediately went down from the mountain. Qing Luo brought two of the silver dragons and roamed the sky, ready for

my command. Without my orders, she would not leave.

At the foot of the mountain, the Royal Army was on stand by. Once they saw me return, Xiao Lie and Han Yuan both urged their horses forward and asked, “General, how is it?”

I smiled, “Aren’t you afraid of death?”

“Huh....?” The two slightly stiffened and then shook their heads, “We’re not afraid!”

“That’s fine!” I looked over at the Royal Army and candidly said, “Right now, the Hybrid Demons are throwing a siege at the Eastern Defense Line of Dragon City. They’re trying to break through our defenses. Afterwards, they’ll enter from the south and attack. Our mission is to push those Hybrid Demons back. I’m not going to sugarcoat this, this time our enemy is the Blood Giant Kehl.”

“The Blood Giant Kehl?”

One of the team leaders gulped, his face ashen, “I’ve seen that name appear in the history books. The Blood Giant Kehl is one of the Hybrid Demon Kings. He’s lived close to ten thousand years. We... are we really going to fight that devil?”

I nodded, “Exactly. That is our mission as the Royal Army. Do you want to be raised as a princeling, or do you want to fight like a soldier?”

With that arousing, all of the soldiers in the Royal Army pumped their weapons and shouted, “For the empire!”

With a satisfied grin, I ordered, “Set out and follow me!”

I urged my horse up the mountain slope. The five thousand Royal Army soldiers followed me as well. Confidence and excitement filled Han Yuan and Xiao Lie’s face.

Not long after, we reached the peak of the Ice Ridge Mountain. Our horses’ hooves slid several times on the ice. All of the soldiers in the Royal Army were in defensive stances. Suddenly, a scream cut through the silence. One of the knights had slid off the wall of ice and screamed as he

disappeared into the darkness. Everyone's blood ran cold.

I shouted, "Do not look towards the East. Continue forward!"

Xiao Lie wrapped his cloak tightly around his arms and shuddered. Even so, the chilly bitter wind raised goosebumps on his skin. Everyone was holding a flame, a resource for warmth. Unfortunately, it was barely enough to feel.

"It's too cold here..." One of the knights furrowed his brow, "If my father knew that I was going to such a freezing environment, he'd probably be extremely distressed..."

That comment made a whole group of people laugh. A couple of soldiers who were friends with him teased, "Little Hai, don't be such a girl. How about you go on back to the city so that you can suck on your mother's milk again? Why should you come to the Hybrid Demon Territory to die?"

The soldier, Little Hai's face went red and he clenched his teeth, "You... you... Hmph, I'm not going to argue with you here. Let me tell you now, there isn't a single soft egg in our Rocklin family!"

"That's good!" Han Yuan smiled, "Our Lord Commander said our enemy is the Blood Giant Kehl and a group of Earth Giants that he's leading. I hope that you all won't wet your pants when you see them."

I didn't comment and only continued forward with my Ancient Heavenly Tiger.

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I heard another scream. A dozen or so soldiers had fallen off the cliff. Even though each scream pained my heart, there was no helping them. This was a part of our training. Destiny isn't some amusement park, it is filled with conflict and death. Seeing as these people had chosen to join the army, they were destined to be constantly plunged in blood and flames. Otherwise, they could only become a mule to be killed. That was even worse.

Dragon Graveyard. There were a pile of dragon bones piled at the center of the valley. It was a map that I was very familiar with from my training.

Coming back now as the Commander of the Royal Army with five thousand troops behind me made my blood boil with excitement. Despite all of my ambitions for the future, I could still feel a small seed of worry. Worry about whether or not this battle in the Dragon Graveyard was a blessing or a curse. This was still my concern.

“Faster!”

I could see the firelight ahead of us. I urged my horse forward, while two thousand cavalymen followed behind me. A group of Barbarians from the shield formation and foot soldier regiments marched behind them. It took around ten minutes for all of us to reach the valley entrance. The battle there was extremely fierce. Of the two hundred Dragon City soldiers, over half of them had been killed. What was left of the shield formation had been crushed by a group of five meter tall Earth Giants. The dead corpses had been crushed into unidentifiable meat pulp under the Giants’ foot. The scent of raw flesh and fresh blood filled our noses.

“Wu...”

Some of the soldiers in the Royal Army couldn’t stand the smell and began to gag. Han Yuan coldly smiled, “You pansies, how can you fight in that state?”

I raised my sword and ordered, “Shield Camp, trade places with the Dragon City soldiers!”

“Yes sir!”

Xiao Lie gave the command, ordering three thousand Barbarian soldiers to advance and take their place. The Barbarians were around two meters tall, and were already fairly gigantic compared to a normal person. However, before the Earth Giants, they were like children. However, their strength was unquestionable. The shields rammed into the ground one after another, and they were able to withstand the strength of the giants’ continuous charges.

“Peng peng peng....”

One of the Barbarian soldier’s shield had cracked. Even top quality

shields couldn't withstand the pressure from the Hybrid Demons' savage attacks. The Barbarian soldiers stiffened, and before he could react, one of the Earth Giants let out a roar and swung his steel fists right at him!

“Pu!”

A cruel scream sounded as the Barbarian's head was smashed in by the Earth Giant. Even as his body fell to his knees, he still gripped his blade. Blood and brains poured out around his body. Almost all of the soldiers in the Shield Camp were stupefied. Who would've thought that the Hybrid Demons would be that powerful? Even the cavalymen were scared witless. They had personally witnessed the strength of the Barbarians. If even the Barbarians couldn't hold against these demons, how could a normal person?

“Hold your formations!” Han Yuan shouted, “Shield Camp, hold your positions! Use your shields to defend, and your blades to seek the chance and cut through their legs. If you cut their tendons, they won't be able to move!”

I looked over towards the cavalry camp's soldiers and shouted, “Raise your flames! Archers, target the Earth Giant's eyes and blind them! They'll become headless flies!”

I then charged forward with my sword and threw a [Combo]+[Wind Blade], pushing back one of the Earth Giants. Then, with a slash of my Zhen Yue Blade, I dealt a [Strength of a Thousand Men], crushing the Earth Giant's legs. Blood spurt out like a geyser. All of the Barbarians around me who were in the Shield Camp were gaping. One of them exclaimed, “Lord Commander is amazing....”

Behind me, I heard the sounds of arrows whizzing through the air. One after another, the Earth Giants cried out as they were being blinded. The Royal Army's training was very well rounded and complete. These humans learned everything from riding, to swordsmanship and archery. There wasn't a single job that they weren't skilled at. Times like these were what truly tested their training.

“Ji ji....”

We heard cries coming from the sky above. Han Yuan looked up and shoued, “What?!”

I quickly warned them, “Careful of an ambush from the skies. It’s the Hybrid Demon Plunderers!”

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Chapter 764: Unwavering Spirit

Plunderers were aerial type monsters and were one of the more unique troops in the Hybrid Demon Army.

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Everyone looked up at the sky, but could only see several dark figures swooping around. Screams rang out from all sides as they were picked up in the Plunderers enormous claws and ripped apart by its sharp teeth and strong jaws. These characteristics were what made the Plunderers such a nightmare.

“Careful, duck down!”

Han Yuan raised his spear and shouted, “Do not get ambushed!”

Unfortunately, no matter what, the Barbarians couldn’t react soon enough. Some of them were frozen with fear, their necks extended and left bare to the monsters.

“Ka ka ka....”

The sound of bones being crushed filled the air. Some of the Barbarians didn’t even get the chance to scream before they fell to their knees, blood pooling from their necks. Their heads had flown away, clutched in the Plunderers claws. This was their signature attack, capable of immediately taking a man’s life.

“F*cking hell!”

Xao Lie roared and spun around to grab a spear. He quickly targeted his prey and hurled the spear. A screech sounded out and one of the Plunderers plummeted to the ground. “Peng!” It fell amongst the crowd of people. Han Yuan immediately charged forward with his spear and shouted, “Crush it!”

Several Barbarians who couldn’t hold in their anger any longer immediately turned around and raised their broadswords. “Ka Cha Ka Cha!” They hacked away at the monster. The Plunderer was quickly chopped to pieces, every part still quivering. Despite that, there was no

way it could revive. That Plunderer's death gave the troops a boost in morale. Han Yuan raised his bloody sword and shouted, "Look, these Hybrid Demon trash are also made of flesh and blood. There's nothing extraordinary about them. Summon your courage! You are the Royal Army, you are soldiers of the empire. Kill these monsters that are invading your homes. That is your mission!"

Mission resounded in the hearts of all the Royal Army soldiers. Everyone's eyes began to brighten with resolve. Even as the blood of their comrades ran in rivers on the ground, it did not wash away their courage. However, the sounds of death were still ringing out. Against such a strong Hybrid Demon, casualties were unavoidable. Besides, the battle power of the Royal Army was never the top in Tian Ling City. Even if he had reorganized the troops, we still needed to train them. And today was the chance to do so.

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"Grrr...."

A group of the Earth Giants growled as they were stopped by the Royal Army. It had already been ten minutes since they were last able to advance. Clearly, there was some kind of supervisor amongst the monsters. That was the Blood Giant Kehl. Even though we didn't see him, that b*st*rd must not be far. Otherwise, there was no way these Earth Giants would rush to their deaths like this. One after another, their tendons were cut and they stumbled to the ground. Afterwards, the Barbarians in the Royal Army would surround their fallen enemy and hack the monster to its death. All of the Barbarian foot soldiers were one to three times stronger than the average human. All of their attacks were powerful and savage. We gave each one a sharp iron broadsword, perfect for close combat. Even against terrifying Hybrid Demons like the Earth Giants, they showed little fear. It was because the Barbarians were so heroic that the other soldiers were able to summon their courage and follow by example. All of them kept fighting until their eyes turned red. They were putting aside all worries of life and death and fought with all their might.

“Peng!”

A crack suddenly appeared in the shield formation. A dozen or so Earth Giants had broken through the first line of defense in the Royal Army. I raised a brow and ordered, “Han Yuan, taken some people and fill the hole!”

Han Yuan raised his blood sword and saluted, “Yes general!”

He shouted orders and took a couple dozen cavalymen to the location. He dipped forward and pulled a long spear from one of the Plunderer’s corpse. He then hurled it out, bringing down one of the Earth Giants. Han Yuan’s spear had pierced right through its throat.

“Kill!”

Han Yuan pulled out his sword and halberd from his sheath and charged at the Earth Giant. He swung his halberd, the movements forming the image of a beautiful deadly flower for a moment as it then burst forward like the flame of a dragon. “Pu Chi!” The spear pierced through the Giant. Who would’ve thought that its will to live was so incredibly strong? The attack had only injured it, and didn’t deal a death blow. It suddenly grabbed the hilt of the halberd with its steel fists and swung his other fist towards Han Yuan’s head. It looked to be a mortal blow.

Han Yuan, however, was one of the most courageous generals in the Royal Army. How could he waver? He immediately let go of his halberd and sprinted backward, dodging the fist of the Earth Giant. He then pulled out his long sword and leapt up from his horse. Midair, he tightened his grip and roared. “Ka Cha!” The Earth Giant let out an answering scream. While Han Yuan couldn’t completely cut through his head, his cut went deep into its skull.

He slashed again with all his might. Han Yuan had successfully cut off the Earth Giant’s head.

The moment that Earth Giant’s head fell, another Earth Giant rushed forward and slashed Han Yuan’s arm. The general was flung backward with a groan. He must’ve taken injuries from that hit.

The other Royal Army Cavalrymen finally charged forward. They swung their weapons in a fierce attack. One after another, the Earth Giants were barraged with pierces and cuts. They were practically turning into porcupines. Like this, our soldiers traded off, displaying their might. With this tactic, we managed to fell a dozen of so of the Earth Giants.

“Cough cough...”

Han Yuan picked himself up from the ground and leapt back onto his horse. Blood covered his face and he fiercely said, “These f*cking giants... I... I will kill them all!”

.....

In the distance, Xiao Lie quickly gave a signal, “Be careful, their next wave is here!”

In the darkness, we saw enormous figures sprinting across the landscape. There were at least a thousand Earth Giants coming at us, while the current Earth Giants before us only numbered around two hundred. The power behind this next wave of Hybrid Demons was truly terrifying.

“Careful!”

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and stood at the center of the Shield Formation and shouted, “It looks like these Earth Giants have something in their hands!”

“What?” Han Yuan was stunned.

Xiao Lie squinted at the shadows in the distance. He then shuddered and said, “D*mm*t, they have boulders! These Giants want to smash our formation with boulders?”

I looked at the soldiers in the Shield Formation and said, “Use both hands to hold your shields. Make sure your bodies are completely covered by the shield. We have to hold off this next round of attacks! They won’t have too many boulders at hand. We just have to wait for them to use them all up!”

One after another, the soldiers in the Shield Formation looked up at me and shouted, "Yes Commander!"

.....

I looked at the figures in the distance. The soldiers in the Royal Army were almost out of breath. Who knew how many more would die in this next wave of attacks? This was unavoidable. From the moment we set out on this mission, we were prepared for this kind of outcome.

"Hua!"

A strong gale rose up and a boulder that was at least a meter long flew at us from a distance and accelerated towards the formation! "Peng!" One of the Shield Formation Barbarian soldiers was thrown back into the second row of soldiers. This created a domino effect that impacted even the fourth row of soldiers. Only then was the boulder stopped. Several of the soldiers hit by the boulder spat out some blood. The impact was too forceful, even the Barbarians with their above average strength couldn't stand against it.

Another two or three boulders flew at us from the sky. The soldiers in the cavalry camp were starting to lose hope. If even the Barbarians in the Shield Formation were pushed back by this force, then what would it do to humans? They'd probably be instantly crushed...

I stood before the human troops. One of the boulders was heading right for me!

A boulder hurled by a Level 146 Third Level Hybrid Demon. In reality, those monsters were nothing to me. I dipped forward on my battle horse and raised my Zhen Yue Blade with my left arm. "Keng!" the boulder was sliced cleanly in half by my Zhen Yue Blade, decreasing the force of the boulder. It slowly rolled into the grass behind me.

The Royal soldiers who were watching could barely close their mouths. Han Yuan stared in awe, "Her Highness Princess Pearl said that Commander has the strength of three armies. Looks like she wasn't exaggerating. General is truly strong..."

It was possible that seeing me in action had boosted everyone's morale. Xiao Lie rode on this wave of excitement and shouted, "Brothers, do not worry! Even though the Earth Giants are strong, they're also stupid. Look, a lot of the boulders are being flung into the pile of dragon bones! Everyone, focus and prepare to battle!"

"Yes sir!"

.....

It was just as Xiao Lie had said, the Earth Giants had terrible aim. Out of ten, at most one or two would actually hit the formation. The impact of that first boulder was just a coincidence. Once they faced us in close quarters, they could do nothing against the quick attacks from the Barbarians in the Shield Formation. One after another, the Earth Giants fell before the human troops. Xiao Lie and Huan Yuan lead a thousand Royal Army Cavalry out of the formation, killing everything in sight. Despite their victories, they suffered great losses. They retreated covered in injuries and blood. The casualties were terrifying.

Suddenly, a beautiful figure descended from the sky. Qing Luo raised her long sword and looked across the battlefield in the Dragon Graveyard. She let out a sigh, "And here I thought that these little princelings only knew how to hit on girls and blow empty air. Who would've thought... they would actually be able to fight so fiercely for Dragon City. Alright, Lord Dragon Knight, allow me and the two Silver Dragon Knights to take some of the pressure on the Royal Army!"

I nodded my consent. I cast a glance at the Royal Army's formation. If I let them continue fighting like this against the Earth Giants, I was afraid that even if we won, we'd only have a few survivors left. Thankfully this wasn't the main battlefield. If we were up against thousands of Hybrid Demon troops, we'd probably be completely annihilated.

The screech of dragons rang out in the sky. Qing Luo lead two other Silver Dragon Knights rushing from the sky. Dragon Breath unfurled onto the Earth Giant troops. Quite a few had been frozen and then crushed to pieces. Qing Luo unsheathed her swords and threw several slashes. That

brat must've improved quite a bit from following Frost for so long. She'd actually reached the point where she could hold down three Hybrid Demons.

.....

“D*mn...”

Xiao Lie looked up at the dragon knights, his eyes filled with awe and respect, “Are those the soldiers of Dragon City? Amazing... Truly amazing...”

Chapter 765: Body and Armor

After the three Dragon Knights began their attack on the wave of Hybrid Demons, the Earth Giant corpses began to pile up. Their losses had been increasingly growing and their morale was falling. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie lead another charge with the cavalry, cutting down even more of the enemies. The Barbarians in the Shield formation were also fighting with their lives on the line as they dealt round after round of attacks. Around an hour later, two thousand Earth Giant corpses were lying on the bottom of the valley. They were completely annihilated by us!

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“Quickly retrieve our weapons. We need to replenish our arrow and spear reserves!”

Under Xiao Lie’s commands, the soldiers of the Royal Army all went out scouting for arrows and spears. Between the corpses of the Giants, there were also lying the bodies of our fallen Royal Army comrades. One of the soldiers in the cavalry camp was collecting arrows with red eyes.

“Commander, our.... Our brothers have all died here. After this battle, are we going to take their bodies back to Tian Ling City for burial?”

Han Yuan quietly said, “According to the Empire’s Battle Law Section Seven Article Two, any fallen soldier whose ranking is below that of a lieutenant is to be buried at the place of death. You must know that rule?”

The knight’s eyes were red as he continued, “Little Hai...Little Hai’s head was smashed in by a boulder... I want to bring his body back to his parents...”

Han Yuan patted his shoulder and said, “Military law is above all else, do not let your emotions confuse you!”

“Yes, General!”

.....

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and roamed the battlefield. After confirming our losses, I looked up at the sky and said, “Qing Luo, can you

help us see if there are any more Earth Giants on our way? Where's the Blood Giant Kehl? Will he be personally coming to attack the Dragon Graveyard?"

I could hear Qing Luo's voice get carried to me by the wind, "Yes sir, I will do it immediately."

The wind in the valley brought a gentle snow that coated the armor of everyone present. The Royal Army solemnly guarded its position. Most of the soldiers' bodies had been moved to a corner of the valley, creating a small mountain. Quite a few of the soldiers who were in charging of clearing the bodies were retching for a while. Even more so, many of the soldiers cried out, only to be silenced by the Generals. Sorrow would only muddle the morale of the troops. Most of all, sorrow revealed weakness.

I looked at the grass on the ground; it had been dyed red with blood. I could see the markings of battle horses everywhere. The cavalry stood beside their battle horses. The horses on the other hand, had no idea of the cruelty of the battlefield. They only bothered to nibble on the grass that had yet to be stained by blood.

Not long after, Qing Luo descended on her crystal dragon to me and reported, "Lord Dragon Knight, I have already confirmed, the Blood Giant Kehl has given up on his advance through the Dragon Graveyard. Even if he managed to break through, there's no way he could make it past the Ice Ridge mountains. Furthermore, we're an enormous stumbling block for him. Kehl isn't an idiot. He took twenty thousand Earth Giants towards Dragon City."

She then blinked a few times and smiled, "Ah, I've also brought some orders from Lady Frost."

"Ok, go ahead!" I smiled.

Qing Luo replied, "Lady Frost said, in order to prevent any future problems, she wants the Royal Army to continue guarding the Dragon Graveyard until dawn. After dawn, the Hybrid Demons will naturally halt their attack on Dragon City. After all, the Plunderers, Magic Sword Masters, and Grave Diggers are all afraid of light. They don't even come

out on cloudy days.”

I nodded, “Alright, that’s fine. We’ll guard this map until dawn. After that, I’ll take my men back to Tian Ling City. We’ve taken heavy losses, and need to take some time to rejuvenate our troops.”

“Ok!”

Qing Luo nodded, and then gave me a long look, “Don’t worry, Lady Frost will personally deliver a letter to the Tian Ling City officials to let them know just how the Royal Army has upheld its honor and dignity for the protection of the empire.”

I replied, “Ok, thank you. Take the two Silver Dragon Knights back to Dragon City. Be careful!”

“Yes sir, you too!”

“Ok!”

.....

Once they heard that the Blood Giant Kehl was redirecting his troops, both Han Yuan and Xiao Lie couldn’t help but let out a sigh of relief. Even though those to b*st*rds were heroic generals, they still valued their lives. They knew that if they went up against a terrifying existence like the Blood Giant Kehl, there was less than a ten percent chance of survival.

Xiao Lie raised his broadsword and urged his horse over to me, “Lord Commander, up until now, of the five thousand men we brought, we’ve lost 724 people. A thousand have taken heavy injuries, and two thousand have light injuries. Almost the entire army has taken some kind of injury!”

I nodded.

Han Yuan’s voice showed a hint of frustration, “Those d*mned Hybrid Demons, they’re really savage. We’ve got a lot of injured people, and a lot of dead soldiers!”

I said, “There’s at least around two thousand Hybrid Demon corpses here. For our Royal Army, that’s a battle power that we never would’ve imagined to possess...”

Han Yuan exclaimed, "General, what were your initial predictions?"

I held up two fingers and said, "I originally thought that we would lose at least two thousand brothers!"

"....."

Han Yuan was stunned. He slowly sheathed his bloody sword, his eyes dark. "General, the people who died, they aren't just a number, they are made of flesh and blood. Do you not feel anything for them?"

I softly sighed, "Emotions, so what if I have emotions? Dying here is much more worthy than dying for some kind of civil war."

Han Yuan stiffened, "My lord, even you've heard the rumors?"

"What rumors?"

The kings of Flame Cloud City and Port City seem to have complaints about King Rocklin. Both kingdoms have been gathering their troops. When the time is right, I'm afraid that they will attack. By that time, I worry that the mission before the Royal Army won't be as simple as killing Hybrid Demons."

I smiled. Looks like we really are going to have the Kingdom Battles. Even the NPCs can tell.

.....

We remained at our post until dawn the next day. The fog slowly dissipated as rays of light hit our shoulders. Everyone let out a sigh of relief, as though they were given another chance to live. After all, there was no need to die here. No matter if it was for the sake of upholding the empire's honor, or protecting their homes, they managed to keep their lives.

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and said, "Bury the bodies of all the soldiers who died. For any soldiers who are ranked above lieutenant, put them on the carts to send back to the city!"

Smoke rose up from the valley as the scent of burning dead bodies filled our noses. All of the Royal Army soldiers watched as their comrades were

put underground. Cries rang throughout the valley. Xiao Lie pierced his long sword into the dirt and knelt before the graves, tears welling up in his eyes. His voice cracked as he sang the elegy to their nation's soldiers—

O Magnificent Tian Ling, O Brave Warriors,

I give thee my devoted loyalty, no matter where my bones are buried.

O Magnificent Tian Ling, O Brave Warriors,

Wear your armor proudly, your Spirit is bound to our Nation.

.....

The mountain path was covered in frost. I lead my horse forward at the head of our troop. We were ready to head home. We came in high spirits, but returned with solemn faces. While we couldn't hold our heads high, at least these soldiers now knew what war was like. Most of these noblemen son's joined so that they could brag about their bravery as they fought on the frontlines to the pretty noblewomen. Of course, in a real battle, being handsome and noble had nothing to do with winning. At least, not before a strong enemy. Strong enemies like the Hybrid Demons would kill the Royal Army soldiers solely based on their power and strength. That was a thought that would forever remain in the back of everyone's mind.

As we passed by Dragon City, we saw that the battle there had also ended. Everyone was in the middle of carrying the bodies of the dead. Their situation wasn't much better than ours. Despite the chilly winters of Dragon City, the reality was that the city was like a stove. Every time the Hybrid Demons came to attack, there were always bodies left behind. Furthermore, the Hybrid Demon troops seemed to be endless. No matter how many we killed, there was always another wave waiting on the other side.

I decided to not bid farewell to Frost. She was probably busy anyways. However, it looked like the fifteen Dragon Knights were extremely advantageous for Dragon City. If this battle had happened in the past when we didn't have the dragons, then this attack would've been enough to make Dragon City fall once again.

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We passed through Zi Wu Mountain and the Gale Forest. Around an hour later, we met a knight dressed in golden armor as he rode up to us. He congratulated, "You must be the Royal Army, coming back from fighting off the Earth Giants in Dragon City?"

I nodded, "Yes!"

The knight became excited and said, "I'm one of Lord Knights of the Empire—Porter. The King has commanded me to welcome you home. Hurry, His Majesty, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Second Prince, and Her Highness Princess Pearl are all waiting outside the city walls to greet you!"

I was stunned, "The Royal Army only went to Dragon City to hold off some Hybrid Demons for a night. That isn't some great accomplishment, is it necessary to have such a grand entrance?"

Bitterness flashed across the knight's face, "Don't ask so many questions, just lead your army back. Maybe His Majesty is just here to congratulate the soldiers and now you."

I was speechless.

Han Yuan walked up and whispered in my ear, "The empire is filled with kiss *sses like him. General, I know that you probably aren't willing to lower yourself to his level, but... seeing as we're living in the empire, we cannot act too forcefully. Otherwise, it'll only harm yourself."

I nodded, "Yes, understood!"

.....

Under my command, the Royal Army sped up and followed me towards Tian Ling City. The city that these men were spilling blood to protect.

Before the city, a battle flag waved proudly in the wind. King Rocklin stood front and center before the crowd of people who were welcoming us home. Besides that, there were some troops outside the city. It looked as though they were the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army. There

were more than two thousand of them. Besides them, I could see many players mixed in with the onlookers.

When Han Yuan and Xiao Lie and I stepped forward, and stood up straight and said, “Long live His Majesty! I am here to submit my mission!”

As I said that, I pulled out the tablet and gave it to Princess Pearl. She smiled at me as she accepted the tablet.

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie all slid off their horses and knelt before the princess. Only I remained on my horse. There was no way I would bow my head before a muddleheaded tyrant like him as a player. In his dreams!

One of the Generals in the crowd gripped his hilt and shouted, “Li Xiao Yao, as the Commander of the Royal Army, why do you not bow before His Majesty?”

I ignored him.

King Rocklin smiled, “Nevermind, General Li, there’s no need to stand on ceremony. I’ve already received the report from Dragon City. The soldiers of the Royal Army have fought well in the battle of Dragon City. You are truly among the most talented men of Tian Ling City. I now bestow onto you, Two Golden Swords, a Royal Flag, a Nation Protecting Shield, and One Million Gold. I look forward to your continued success on the battlefield!”

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie responded, “Yes, your majesty!”

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At the same time, I received another two hundred points in achievements. King Rocklin looked over to me and said, “General Li, follow me back to the palace. I have more matters to speak of with you!”

I stiffened slightly. I was getting a bad feeling.

Chapter 766: The World's Armies

After the Royal Army was settled down in their barracks, I followed the king to the palace. We entered straight into the inner halls. None of the officials were there, only King Rob, Pearl, Theodore and Owen. They were all among the most famous people in the city, and the entire Tian Ling City Empire was within the palm of their family's hands.

After I slid off my horse, I carried my swords on my back as I entered the palace. I felt somewhat conflicted, and finally decided to formally greet them, "I pay my respects to his majesty, and their highnesses, the crown prince, the second prince and the princess!"

Pearl smiled and nodded in acknowledgement, "General Li Xiao Yao, there's no need to be so polite!"

King Rob also smiled to me, "Yes, no need to be so stiff!"

I decided to not beat around the bush, "Just what does his highness want to discuss with me?"

King Rob's eyes lit up, "General Li, you have exhibited great skill in leading troops. You managed to straighten up such a disorganized and messy army in such a short time, not to mention strengthen it enough to hold off the Hybrid Demon troops. You have killed two thousand Hybrid Demons with a rotten and rusty army. This is definitely an impressive feat!"

I wasn't sure how I was supposed to respond. My thoughts were jumbled and I said, "It was all due to the will of my soldiers. Nothing else."

King Rob said, "Even if that was the case, you, General Li, are a superbly rare hero, even amongst the great heroes throughout history."

I furrowed my brow and said, "Your majesty, just what is it?"

Pearl cut in, "General Li Xiao Yao, do you know why father has bestowed a Royal Flag onto the Royal Army?"

"Why?" I had actually not paid any particular attention to that.

The Crown Prince Owen coldly laughed, “Don’t try to play ignorant. The reason Father gave you a Royal Flag is because he intends to make you into a Lord. As long as you remain loyal to father and properly perform your duties to the kingdom, becoming a Lord is not a far fetched dream.”

I smiled, “So it was like that!”

King Rob stepped towards me, a crimson sword in his hand, “General Li, this is a Sword of Knights. It was created by the empire’s best weaponsmiths. There are only three Sword of Knights like this in the entire Tian Ling City. One is in the hands of Theodore, while the other is with Owen. And now, there is this one. Right now, I am planning on giving it to you. But, in order for me to do so, you must promise me one thing.”

“What is it?”

King Rob waved his hand, displaying his grand attitude, “Kneel before me, claim yourself as a servant to the empire. From now on, you, Li Xiao Yao, must vow to be loyal to only I, Rob. Vow that you will place nothing above my orders and that you will execute every one of them. That you will protect the power of the royal family in the empire. If you vow to that, the sword is yours.”

I stiffened. I could feel a sense of pride welling up in my chest and smiled, “Become a servant of the empire? To be honest, I was already one of the empire’s citizens, and am naturally bound to the nation.”

Theodore was starting to get angry, “Li Xiao Yao, are you declining?”

I looked up at him and said, “Kneeling with one knee is a sign of respect in the military, but to kneel with both knees is something I will never do. I, Li Xiao Yao, will kneel before the heavens and my father and mother, but I will not bow before anyone else!”

“You impudent brat!”

Rage was also starting to rise up in Owen, “Li Xiao Yao, you dare to show such disrespect to father. Are you suicidal!?”

In a harsh tone, I replied, “In the beginning, when I joined Dragon City, I had already vowed to Frost that I will protect and guard Dragon City for

life. And so, I will not show the same loyalty to another man. Your majesty, I hope that you will understand my difficulties. Even so, I will continue to perform my duties to the empire!”

I could see a sliver of disappointment and killing intent in King Rob’s eyes. He smiled, “General Li truly is a rare hero. Alright then... It will be as you wish. You will remain the general of the Royal Army, and continue to fight for the empire!”

I turned around and left.

.....

I could hear the two princes arguing as I left—

Theodore: “Father, how could you allow this disrespectful youngling to continue as the general of the Royal Army? Sister, you actually praised this kid for us. Have you become confused by your feelings?”

Pearl: “Brother, I haven’t!”

Owen: “Father, seeing as that Li Xiao Yao isn’t willing to accept your gift, why don’t you...”

Pearl lowered her voice, “Second brother, you want to kill Li Xiao Yao? I ask that you put that thought away. Li Xiao Yao is the Dragon Knight of Dragon City, and he’s also the direct student of Frost. Frost regards him as extremely valuable. If... if you really kill him, then you should also prepare for Frost’s fifteen Dragon Knights to come knocking on your door for revenge!”

Rob groaned, “Everyone, stop arguing. Just leave Li Xiao Yao as is....”

Theodore angrily said, “Father, how could you be so soft? How could you allow him to be so arrogant?”

Rob was starting to look annoyed, “Theodore, remember who you are talking to! Li Xiao Yao’s strength is truly the top among the empire’s armies. Right now, he’s someone I need. Otherwise, did you think that relying on your Flame Dragon Army and those deputy generals, you would be able to hold off the Hybrid Demons? Don’t think I don’t know. There

isn't a single one that isn't raising at least three women in the capital. Is there any of them that aren't alcoholics?"

Theodore replied, "I did not manage my subordinates well, I admit it!"

"Hmph!"

.....

I didn't relax until I had made it out of the palace, and then my heart leapt with joy. I was a player, and so naturally I should live carefreely. If they want me to become a servant to some old fogey, dream on. I didn't want to spend the rest of my playing time stressing over pointless responsibilities.

I strolled along the streets of Tian Ling City. Suddenly, a bell rang in the air. The new update was released.

"Ding!"

System Notification: Players, take note. The new update [The World's Armies] has been released. The entire continent will enter a chaotic state. Players will face attacks from Hybrid Demons and players from other countries. You may choose to enter any army within your home city and become a warrior. As players complete missions and quests, they will receive a set amount of Achievement Points, which can later be exchanged for higher ranked military promotions. We wish you the best of luck and fortune as you fulfill your dreams of becoming Generals!

.....

Not long after the update was released, the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army's recruitment was completely filled. After all, these two were the strongest within Tian Ling City. At the same time, they had the most number of soldiers, making them have the hardest difficulty to rise up the ranks. However, these two also had the highest wages and resource handouts. So many players in Tian Ling City were very content to join.

The guild chat was already blowing up with excitement—

Li Mu: “Its finally here!”

Wang Jian: “That pretty Dragon Knight Lieutenant in Dragon City, the one called Qing Luo, has dispatched a dozen or so recruitment tents. Should we start entering, as Brother Xiao Yao has said, and have 20,000 from [Zhan Long] join? Its best if we do it before anyone else comes to Dragon City.”

I asked, “Is [Zhan Long]’s main forces within Dragon City right now?”

Li Mu laughed, “Yup. We made sure to come here half an hour early. Ten thousand of our Steel Blade Cavalry are all here. There other ten thousand are all elites who rushed over.”

I cheerfully replied, “That’s good. Now that Dragon City is recruiting players as soldiers, I wouldn’t actually trust it in the hands of any other guild. That’s right, has there been any news from the other guilds?”

Wan Er: “[Legend], [Judgement], [House of Prestige] and the other great guilds of Jiu Li City went and joined the Flame Dragon Army. [Prague], [Vanguard] and the rest are planning on joining Xia Yu. There’s a lot of crisscross in between too, so the situation isn’t entirely clear.”

I smiled, “I wonder what kind of daily quests will be available after you join.”

Qing Qian grinned, “I was the first player to join the Dragon City army... Oh, no, actually, technically speaking, I’m the second. The first was Brother Xiao Yao. The daily quest today is... wu, it’s to hunt a bear and bring it to the kitchen. Afterwards, I have to go to the Archery Range and practice my archery. If I hit the center three times in a row, I’ll have completed the quest....”

Wolf was speechless, “Assassins have to practice archery too?”

“Yup, it’s supposed to increase our overall strength...”

“...”

.....

I didn’t ask for any more details and returned to the barracks on my

own.

My Flying Scythe Horse slowly walked forward. The soldiers standing guard outside of the barracks bowed in respect to me. After the battle of the Dragon Graveyard, where I had demonstrated my strength and ability to command, the level of respect I received in the army camp had greatly increased. Not to mention my reputation. Originally, there was still quite a few people who weren't convinced of my abilities, but it looked like that was already in the past.

At the center of the camp, I could see the candles of the Strategy Tent still lit. I pushed open the door and saw Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and Deputy General Song waiting for me inside.

Han Yuan raised the Royal Flag and excitedly said, "This is a treasure that King Rob himself had bestowed upon us! A Royal Flag, that is an honor that only royalty deserve. I never would have thought that our Royal Army would receive such an honor!"

Xiao Lie looked over to me. Not only was he a brave general in the battle field, he was also fairly intelligent. While he may be a little less fierce than Han Yuan, but he was definitely more clever. He smiled to me, "General, his majesty didn't press anything upon you, did he?"

I shook my head with a smile, "Not at all, why would he?"

"His majesty..." Xiao Lie lowered his voice, "He didn't try to make you a servant of the empire?"

I stiffened, "How'd you know?"

Xiao Lie smiled, "That has always been a political tactic. Especially in regards to talented Generals such as my lord. How could a king allow you to be free and not ensure your loyalty? General, you must've not..."

I shook my head.

"Why?" Xiao Lie exclaimed, "Aren't you afraid of being punished, or executed?"

I smiled, "What is there to be afraid of? I've long been used to acting

carefreely. I do not like the sentiment of laying down one's life for another. Unless it was for a girl that I loved. Besides, I'm not completely a part of this world, and so there's not as many obstacles before me. Thus, there is no need to worry that much. What I want to do is to train the Royal Army into a troop that will dominate the world in the future. The rest is unimportant."

Xiao Lie nodded, "I have decided to follow my lord, and I vow my allegiance to you!"

"Good! We've suffered quite heavy casualties today. Will there be more recruits?"

"Yes."

Xiao Lie looked outside the camp, a cold light shined from his eyes, "The Royal Army has always maintained a scale of around ten thousand people. After the Battle of the Dragon Graveyard, his majesty has dispatched five thousand people from each of the two armies, the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army to replenish the Royal Army. He plans on making us a twenty thousand man army. However, this also means that... About half of the men here will not be completely loyal to you."

I could feel frustration welling up in my chest, "Why won't he let us recruit our own soldiers? He's clearly using these people to balance out my power in the army..."

Han Yuan cut in, "General, don't be angry. Anger doesn't solve anything. We can only plan as we go."

I then made an effort to calm down, and softly nodded, "Ok."

Chapter 767: Long Xing and Xia Ye

In the center of the Royal Army Camp. Not long after, two Generals clothed respectively in red armor and black armor walked into the tent. They were two commanders of the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army. They were both ranked as Lieutenant Commanders. The Flame Dragon Army's Commander was called 'Long Xing' and looked to be around thirty five years old. There was a groomed goatee on his chin. He was tall and sturdy, but didn't look to be very strong. The other commander, who was in charge of the Xia Yu Army, was called 'Xia Ye', and was a young general around twenty five years old. He was around my age, and actually managed to climb his way up to this rank.

The difference was that I, the Royal Army General, was still only ranked militarily as a Lieutenant General. Long Xing and Xia Ye used to also be Lieutenant Generals, and would've been the same rank as me. However, these two were also the Crown Prince and the Second Prince's men. Clearly they were here to suppress me for whenever I showed "abnormal" behavior.

Long Xing entered the strategy tent with his sword at his hip. He stood before the sand table and smiled, "I, Long Xing, pay my respects to the General. Your reputation precedes you!"

Xia Ye was also grinning widely. He placed a dagger on the table and smiled, "I, Xia Ye, am also willing to follow the General's orders, whether it's through a mountain of blades or a sea of flames, I will go to any lengths!"

I wryly smiled. I didn't bother to scold them on their overly flippant attitude. Instead I said, "Xiao Lie, bring some wine. Let's celebrate the arrival of the Generals Long Xing and Xia Ye!"

Xiao Lie said, "General, the Royal Army has a new rule that forbids drinking within the tents."

I thus replied, "It's fine, that's a rule meant for times of war. The great battle has yet to arrive, what's the problem with some men who want to

drink?”

“Yes, I will go and get it now!”

.....

Long Xing picked up his sheathe and placed it on the table as he sat down. He looked at me with arrogance, “I heard that the General was the one who lead the ‘ruffian corps’ Royal Army to battle in Dragon City. You guys actually managed to kill two thousand of the legendary Hybrid Demons?”

I sat down as well and said, “That is correct.”

Long Xing smiled, “While I was in the Flame Dragon Army, I lead a division of over ten thousand people. However, we’ve been fighting constantly on the southern lines, facing off the attacks from Port City. And so, we’ve never had a chance to meet some real Hybrid Demons. They must not be as strong as the rumors say so. After all, the Royal Army was about to kill two thousand of them.”

I smiled and calmly said, “Holding off an advance from the Hybrid Demons is number one priority for the Royal Army. Now that General Long Xing has come to lead his troops in my Royal Army, then I’m sure you’ll get the chance to see just how strong those demons are.”

Long Xing visibly shuddered. He never would have expected me to counter his sentence. After all, he was of noble birth, how could he understand all of the different arguments and excuses. He smiled, “Then I look forward to it.”

On the side, General Xia Ye looked at me and said, “I heard that General has recruited a bunch of Barbarians living in the Magic Bamboo Forest. I originally heard that the Royal Army was only made up of princelings who lived extravagant life styles. I never would have expected it to take in a bunch of disdainful Barbarians. My lord is truly a capable man.”

I looked at him with a straight face, “Everyone with a life is equal. There is no need to separate based on wealth or race. The Barbarians are also humans. They just don’t live in the same city as us. Besides, the Royal

Army is no longer a princeling army. When I entered, I had kicked all of the useless ones out. Right now, the Royal Army is a troop of experienced fighters who are willing to die at any moment for the country. However, they are not, nor will they ever be, someone else's tools."

Xia Ye stiffened. Suspicion rose up in his eyes, "General Li, just what do you think a soldier's mission is in Tian Ling City?"

I thought for a moment, "To obey, in heart and mind."

Xia Ye smiled, "Obeying is a vocation, that I know, but what does it mean, in heart and mind?"

I stood up and leaned against the sand table with a smile, "For what reason did we join the army? Some people joined so that they could become rich. Some joined so that they could become noblemen. However, it is my firm belief that the most important issue to a military man is to understand his worth. We aren't some private army for some noblemen, we are the empire's army. We fight for our homes and for our people!"

"Good!"

A peculiar expression lit up in Xia Ye's eyes. He stood up and smiled, "That is truly a quote to go down in history, fight for our homes and our people!"

As he said that, Xia Ye backed up a step and knelt on one knee, "I general Xia Ye, pay my respects to the General. I entrust my life to you, as well as the five thousand lives of my brothers!"

I celebrated internally. This Xia Ye was very young, and at first it appeared that he kept people at an arm's length. However, I could tell that hot blood ran through his veins. Most of the armies in Tian Ling City were private and kept by noblemen. Each and every one of them are harboring some ulterior motive. Even as the day draws near when the Hybrid Demons are attacking, they still cannot set aside their differences. I'm afraid that many other young Generals like Xia Ye have become jaded by the situation. Now that he had come upon a rock that couldn't be cracked even if it were boiled, he must be beside himself with excitement.

Long Xing smiled on the side. I could see a sliver of mischief and banter in his eyes, “General Xia Ye must have already forgotten our original intent?”

Xia Ye smiled back, “General Long Xing is overthinking it. I, Xia Ye, came to the Royal Army only to protect my home. There was no other intent. Rather, General Long Xing, are you still considering the secret order given by the crown prince?”

A disturbed look entered Long Xing’s expression. Clearly there was something on his mind that he couldn’t say. He smiled and said, “Nevermind. I will remain in the Royal Army and see for myself whether or not the General is truly as he says he is, and fighting for the people!”

I nodded. Right at that moment, Xiao Lie arrived with two jars of wine. He had also brought with him Han Yuan and the other generals. Everyone sat around the table and began to converse freely with the wine and food. This wine wasn’t some expensive treasure, so drinking it didn’t add any stats. Rather, it was very strong and spirited. I could feel my head spin in the game just from drinking it.

In the end, all of the generals in the Royal Army were drunk. I had also admonished myself and made sure this was the only and final time that this would happen. From now on, I would never touch the spirits in the game again.

I glanced at that clock. It was already late in the evening. We had pretty much settled all of the matters in the Royal Army. The next item on the agenda was integrating the ten thousand new troops into our army. I strongly believed that human nature could change. As time goes on, Long Xing and Xia Ye would definitely see themselves as men of the Royal Army.

As I logged off, I realized that there were still quite a few matters to attend to in the real world.

.....

Late in the night, I opened up my window and watched as snowflakes softly fluttered from the sky. It had finally snowed. If my memory served

me right, tomorrow was New Year's Eve. A traditional holiday for Chinese people, one that surpassed all others.

In the other dining room, I saw that Wan Er and Dong Cheng were actually still awake. They were in the middle of sticking fortune characters on the doorways. The scene really brought warmth to the heart, despite the wintry weather outside. Qin Wen was also awake. But, what really brightened my eyes was the Christmas outfit that Wan Er was wearing. A short skirt with fur trimmings was wrapped tightly around her snow white legs. A cute shawl was wrapped around her shoulders. She sat on the couch, her cheeks tinted pink as she separated the packages.

I was a little stunned, "What are you guys doing down here?"

I couldn't take my eyes off of Wan Er. I was mesmerized by her beauty. My heart raced and I smiled, "Wan Er, you didn't wear anything Christmas-y during Christmas, so why now?"

Wan Er looked over at me, her face blushing even harder, "It's all because I lost to a bet against Dong Cheng... This Christmas outfit was a gift we got when we bought our Christmas bracelets, but I never wore it. And so, Dong Cheng and I made a bet, whoever lost would have to wear it for you..."

I facepalmed, "So you ended up losing. What was the bet?"

Wan Er was so embarrassed she couldn't say it.

Dong Cheng looked up with a smile, "I bet that Wang Jian and Star Scar have already gotten the homerun. Wan Er bet that they hadn't. So I carefully interrogated the two. He he, apparently, it was during the second weekend at the Hero's Wings tournament. I mean, how could they have not gotten the homerun? A boyfriend and a girlfriend, living together. The couldn't possibly resist..."

Qin Wen smiled, "Then what about Li Xiao Yao and Wan Er? They're considered dating, and they've been living together for so long. Ai yo, does this mean that you guys hit the homerun already? I need to tell uncle this! Hurry up and buy some snacks so I don't tell!"

Wan Er was speechless. Dong Cheng then said, “Hmph hmph, did you think that all lovers are like these two? It's been so long and they still haven't hit the homerun. I'm dying of anxiety because of them...”

I said, “The emperor doesn't worry, and yet all of his eunuchs do*. That's right, tomorrow is New Year's Eve. Do you all have any plans?”

*TL Note: A joke referring to how the emperor's servants worry more about his night life than the emperor himself

Wan Er said, “Dad wants us to go home, but I don't want to. We almost ended up fighting over it. I really don't know what to do...”

I said, “Then how about we go back? It's just one day.”

Wan Er pouted her lip and looked at me, “Then are you going back home to your Auntie and Meng Yao for the new year?”

“Yup.”

“But I want to be with you...”

“Alright...” I smiled, and sat down beside Wan Er. “How about, we all eat our New Year's Eve dinners in our respective homes, and then I come and get you so that we can watch the sun rise?”

“Ok.” Wan Er was extremely happy.

Dong Cheng asked, Brother Xiao Yao, how has supervising the Royal Army been?”

“Not bad, there's still a lot of things that need to be done. To top it off, King Rocklin, Theodore, and Owen are up to something. It's really making my head ache. I'm afraid that I might be fired not long from now...”

“Good luck, keep it up for a bit more!”

“.....”

.....

After I finished my midnight snack, I went to sleep.

The next day, the celebratory feelings were thick in the air. Everyone was setting off firecrackers and gathering in groups. Wan Er, Dong Cheng and

I weren't interested at all. Instead, we went straight into our games so that we could complete our daily quests. Lin Tian Nan sent a car over to pick up Wan Er, while I drove the A4 to the mall. I went and bought quite a few gifts for Auntie and Meng Yao.

For the New Year's feast, Auntie made several of her most famous dishes. Meng Yao couldn't stop grinning. She asked me this and that, and even tried to get me to teach her the techniques of the Pulse Break Method. Meng Yao was a smart girl, and could easily pick up a skill she wanted to learn. On top of that, the Pulse Break Method truly was an insanely strong technique for soloers. After all, having a lot of skills wouldn't do any harm, learning one more would be good for her. So I helped Meng Yao level up and get better equipment. She was already on par with Yao Yan. With a little more time, surpassing Yao Yan was not a far off dream.

Once Auntie had settled Meng Yao in, I went out. I opened up the A4 as a strong gust of wind blew snowflakes into my face. It was time to pick up Wan Er.

Chapter 768: Unifying the World

“Hua hua...”

The windshield wiper brushed away the falling snow. I made sure to drive slowly to avoid slipping. Either way, there weren't many cars on the road, and the traffic was smooth. I would reach Lin Tian Nan's house within half an hour. It was a manor style house. Truly, being rich is great!

When the headlights of my A4 hit the wall, I could already see Wan Er and her white purse. Wan Er was dressed like a princess as she stood outside the house. Lin Tian Nan stood at her side with an umbrella. Behind them were several people who looked like servants and bodyguards. In a manor this large, Lin Tian Nan must be feeling lonely, and that's why he had so many servants.

.....

My car came to a slow stop. I stepped out with an umbrella over my head. The snowflakes softly pattered against the umbrella. I could see fireworks everywhere, both near and far. The sparklers lit up Wan Er's face with a soft glow. She smiled at me, “Well, looks like you're on time!”

I smiled and didn't say anything. Lin Tian Nan looked over at me and said, “Li Xiao Yao, you came?”

“Yes, Mr. Lin.”

Lin Tian Nan seemed a bit unhappy, “Don't call me Mr. Lin, just call me Uncle Lin. There's no need for the two of us to be so stiff. Besides, Wan Er, this brat, seems to rely on you quite a bit.”

I had not expected him to say something like that, and was momentarily speechless. I finally said, “I'm sorry.”

Lin Tian Nan smiled, “There's no need to be sorry, this isn't your fault anyway. Wan Er, this brat, has been spoiled by me since she was young. She's got a terrible attitude. But... don't you dare bully her. Even if she's spoiled, you must go along with her, or else I will find you!”

I felt a shiver run down my back, “Yes, understood.”

As usual, Lin Tian Nan towered over everyone else, even as he held the umbrella. He continued, "Your salary for this month has already been transferred to your account. Wang Xing should also be updating you on some new information. I know receiving ten thousand every month must be nothing to you now. Your achievements in the game far surpass that amount. If you ever feel that it isn't enough, that's no problem. You can choose to leave. I won't have a problem finding a new bodyguard for Wan Er."

As I stood in the snow, I looked up at Lin Tian Nan and said, "No need, I want to remain at Wan Er's side."

Wan Er smiled and then gave Lin Tian Nan a peculiar look, "Dad, today is New Year's Eve. Why do you keep talking about such strange topics? I don't believe Li Xiao Yao has offended you, has he? Besides... you shouldn't have much say in who I choose as my boyfriend. It was a decision we made."

Lin Tian Nan smiled, "I know, I'm not interfering too much. I just... care about you. Choosing your boyfriend is your decision. I will not interfere any more."

"Good!"

Wan Er smiled and then turned around to hug Lin Tian Nan. She then stood on her tiptoes and kissed him on the cheek, "Happy new years dad, I'm going to head out now?"

Lin Tian Nan nodded.

Wan Er jogged over to my side and hid under my umbrella. She then got into the car. I turned around to make my way to the drivers side. As I was walking away, I heard Lin Tian Nan say to his butler, "Girls leave the nest so fast... Old Shang, let's go and drink for the new years!"

"Alright."

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I closed the car door. I glanced back at Lin Tian Nan's departing figure. It was very lonely and desolate. I felt my chest tighten, and finally said,

“Wan Er, it’s not that good if we just leave in the middle of the night like this. Your dad’s the only one home!”

Wan Er bit her lip and said, “But, he doesn’t particularly like you. I don’t want you to be embarrassed in front of him either. Really.”

I thought for a moment and then said, “Nevermind. You should stay home tonight. Just let me borrow a room.”

“Is that really ok?” Wan Er looked hopeful, and yet there was still some worry in her gaze. It looked like she actually really wanted to stay home, but she also wanted to be with me. As such, she was unsure of what to do.

I nodded, “It’s fine, it’s just one night.”

“Ok!” Wan Er excitedly nodded and then kissed my cheek and smiled, “Pig, sometimes I think that you really are good to me. I’m starting to really fall in love with you...”

I smiled, “You’re only just starting to fall in love with me? Man, and here, I liked you from the start...”

“Hmph, you never said so.”

“Well now I am...”

Wan Er blushed and said, “You didn’t say you liked me until after we kissed. Isn’t that a bit late?”

“Not at all. Hurry up and get out of the car, I’m going to close the door.”

“Ok!”

.....

Wan Er got out of the car. Several snowflakes fell onto her hair as she ran straight for the door. “Pa La Pa La”. Lin Tian Nan looked back and saw that his daughter had come back. His eyes lit up and he smiled, “Wan Er, why’d you come back?”

Wan Er smiled, “I decided to spend New Year’s Eve at home... but dad, Li Xiao Yao will be sleeping over tonight, and you’re not allowed to say anything about it. Otherwise, I’ll get mad!”

Lin Tian Nan grinned, "Alright alright... I won't say anything. Just in time, the room next to yours is empty. I'll have Li Xiao Yao stay there."

"Ok!"

Once I entered Wan Er's house, I was thinking about how generous I was. But, as before, I still had my reservations. They weren't without cause. Especially since I had trained before, I shouldn't be so cautious without rhyme or reason. Is it really only because I was at Wan Er's house?

.....

Lin Tian Nan really went through with his promise and didn't say any kind of criticism. All we did was gather around their dining table and drink. Wan Er brought some snacks and placed it at the center. Afterwards, she came over with a large pillow and waved me over to watch TV. There wasn't much to the New Year's Eve show, just some jokes and laughs. I sat on the side and chewed on sunflower seeds.

Lin Tian Nan drank and looked at us. As Wan Er watched TV, she relaxed into my embrace. I could tell from Lin Tian Nan's eyes that he would much rather separate us immediately. But at the same time, he had promised Wan Er to not interfere. I found this to be very amusing. A man of Lin Tian Nan's status, the number one in Tian Jin Corporation was actually in such a position, all due to his treasured daughter. Lin Tian Nan's weakness was clear, his daughter was the only one.

Now that I thought about it, it was really strange. Lin Tian Nan had found a reliable bodyguard in order to protect his weakness, his daughter. And thus, Wang Xing went and found me. But it was also because of me, that Lin Tian Nan was starting to feel himself lose the love of his daughter. I felt as though he were a farmer, who had spent blood and tears to grow a cabbage, only for it to be taken by his own pig. To top it all off, he couldn't do anything about it.

"Li Xiao Yao?"

After a long time, Lin Tian Nan called out my name.

I turned around, "Uncle Lin, what is it?"

“How about you drink some with me?”

“Ok!”

The servant filled a second cup for me. I then sat beside him. Lin Tian Nan watched me and said, “Li Xiao Yao, what kind of people are in your family?”

I replied, “Auntie, and I have a sister.”

“What about your parents?”

“When I was very young, I heard that they disappeared. According to Auntie, they went to take on the Martial Arts World.”

“Ha....” Lin Tian Nan couldn’t help but let out a sharp laugh, “Then, that must mean that you and your sister rely on each other quite a bit?”

“Yes.”

“When did you start practicing martial arts?” He asked.

I thought about it for a moment and said, “When I was fourteen, around eleven years ago. I studied under an old man for three years. Afterwards, he took me to the border to expand my experience. He said it was to train my personality and maturity. In the end, he disappeared in the middle of a storm, taking our rations along with him.”

Lin Tian Nan’s eyes shone, “Heh. Was Lin Cheng trying to push you to your limits? Afterwards, you joined the Liu Biao’s mercenary, isn’t that right?”

I nodded, “Yes. Unfortunately, I didn’t stay for long.”

Lin Tian Nan smiled, “Liu Biao has long been targeted by the commando troops on the border. It was only natural for a battle to break out. I heard that in the battle, around thirty people died. And you, you founded the Seven Commando Troops, but didn’t kill anyone. Isn’t that right?”

I took a deep breath, “After I joined the mercenary group, I didn’t kill anyone. Each time, I was only in charge of making sure that the enemy didn’t have the chance to fight back.”

“I see.”

Lin Tian Nan nodded, “If Liu Beard’s troop hadn’t been eliminated, if you weren’t the only person who survived, I’m afraid that they wouldn’t have chosen you as a member of the Special Forces. I heard that the Tiger Troop’s battle power was pretty good. But that is all. Their equipment and rations were much smaller.”

I looked over to him and smiled, “That’s why the government came to you. To have the Tian Jin Corp help provide some resources, isn’t that right?”

“Yup, but that isn’t all.” Lin Tian Nan smiled, “When I first took the leadership of Tian Jin Corporation, my goal was to separate from Lockheed Martin. Not because I had received any advantages. Rather, when I brought Tian Jin Corp’s 700 people into the team, I didn’t dare trust any of the military heads. Haha....”

As he said that, Lin Tian Nan looked over at the giggling Wan Er and said, “I’m starting to get old, and I’m not as hot blooded as I used to be. Right now, all I want is to be able to peacefully get through my last years and see Wan Er live happily. That is enough.”

He gave me a long look and said, “So, Wan Er’s choice, means that I am also choosing you. But, if you ever let her become sad, I will not let you live.”

I stiffened. I could feel the killing intent rise and said, “Don’t worry, I completely understand.”

Lin Tian Nan smiled and then lowered his voice, “So, just what makes you think you are suited for Wan Er?”

I was stunned and after a few seconds, I said, “That is... Probably because I can make her as happy as she is right now?”

“Well, you’ve barely passed.”

Lin Tian Nan gripped his cup and said, “I do not need you to do too much, nor do I need you to have many achievements or become famous. Rather, the more achievements you have, the less you will be able to spend

on her. Make sure you train properly, so that you have the strength to protect her. And just make sure that you happily fight monsters with her in the game.”

I nodded, “Ok.”

“That’s right.”

“Is there more?”

“In the game that you guys are playing, the country battles have already started, isn’t that right?”

“So it seems, what’s up?”

Lin Tian Nan smiled, “Its nothing, now that you are Wan Er’s boyfriend. Then... I wish you luck in “Destiny”. Make sure you dominate all of the maps. Can you do it?”

I took a deep breath and looked up at Lin Tian Nan’s expression. Finally, my heart set, I replied, “I can!”

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Unify all of the main cities in Destiny?

The task my future father in law gave me was truly a difficult one...

Chapter 769: Steel Bones

Unifying the kingdoms and defeating each and every one of the main cities of the seven servers?

At first, the idea of it sounded crazy. Despite that, my heart began to leap at the prospect of it. Lin Tian Nan's words did not sound demanding, but rather, a suggestion for a new goal. Additionally, it was a goal that I had hidden deep in my heart, despite how much I had thirsted for it. Can a man in the martial world truly live carefreely, and never interfere with the world?

If he can't, then he can only fight his way to the top and defeat the world!

.....

My eyes bright, I looked towards Lin Tian Nan and smiled, "I understand..."

Lin Tian Nan smiled back and raised his cup, "Let's drink another cup. Today is New Year's Eve, it's rare for you to find the time to stay with Wan Er on a holiday like this."

"Yup, thank you."

I wasn't sure why I had said thank you. All I could think about was the excitement rushing through my veins. Because I knew, while it seemed like Lin Tian Nan was giving me a test, it also meant that he had accepted me as his daughter's boyfriend. I've always been perplexed about whether or not I was truly suited to stay at Wan Er's side for the rest of our lives. But now, I knew which way I was going. As long as I took [Zhan Long] and our brothers to each of the seven great cities, wouldn't that mean that Lin Tian Nan would willingly allow me to have the apple of his eye? Even if I wasn't able to complete the task, my situation wouldn't be any worse than before. At the very least, he had now silently agreed to our relationship.

Once I realized that, I couldn't help but dash to the sofa and give Wan Er a big hug and to tell her everything that had happened. But, as I glanced

over at her, I noticed that Wan Er was smiling at me. It looked like she had already realized everything that happened. Oh, that's right. That brat has the ability to read minds. Even if she hadn't read my mind, she could at least read her father's. She must've found out what he was thinking? As my training continued to advance, my spiritual strength continued to grow stronger. Once Wan Er tries to read my mind, I immediately notice. Furthermore, I could protect against it. That's why last time, when Wan Er was trying to find out why I was so happy, she had to mutter to me that she couldn't read my mind.

I raised the cup and gulped it down. I continued to drink with Lin Tian Nan and his butler. As we conversed, I found out that the butler was like an old friend. His wife had already passed away and his son was studying abroad. Thus, he was on his own, and decided to celebrate the New Year with Lin Tian Nan.

As I listened on the conversation between the two old friends, I began to think of the game. The seven kingdoms of "Destiny" aren't particularly weak countries. Defeating them one by one was not going to be an easy task. Besides that, we cannot underestimate the strength of the players. While the Chinese Servers are strong, the American, Indian, and Russian servers were equally as fierce. Defeating them one by one was not going to be an easy task.

If [Zhan Long] were alone, I'm afraid it would be an extremely difficult task to unify the kingdoms. We needed to rely on our allies such as [Judgement] and [Enemies at the Gate]. And, if necessary, even [Legend], [Vanguard], [Hero's Mound], and [Prague] could become our allies as well. On top of that, the NPC armies of the main cities were not to be disregarded. I had twenty thousand troops in my hands from the Royal Army that needed to be trained. As long as the army developed a superb battle power, then it would definitely become able to overcome any obstacle that comes at it. With them, we'd be able to execute any attack we want.

When I realized that, I could hear my heartbeat pounding against my eardrums. I was beginning to realize that I was on the verge of becoming

crazy. I considered all of the possible methods that we could use to defeat the other countries in the Destiny World, to the point where I was obsessed. And the source of it all was the beautiful girl behind me. Wan Er must know what I was thinking about, right?

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Around ten at night, Lin Tian Nan and Uncle Shang were getting tired. The two of them returned to their bedrooms for the night. Wan Er took me to my room, which had a very elegant design. Wan Er said that whenever Qin Wen came, she would sleep here. Normally, people outside of the family didn't have the privilege of staying in this room. Looks like even Lin Tian Nan's choice of rooms was a sign of his acceptance.

After she showed me my room, Wan Er pulled me over to her room. The room itself was filled with comfort and warmth. I saw a row of stuffed animals resting at her pillows, acting as miniature guards for the little princess. There was a soft fire glowing in her fireplace, warming up the entire suite. I walked over to the window and pulled open the curtains. I could see the flicker of city lights in the distance, past the delicate snowflakes that were falling from the sky. The scene outside only made the room seem even more inviting and welcoming.

I turned around and held Wan Er's hand as I looked into her eyes. I could feel my heart sigh, "From the first time we met, I couldn't ever imagine that I would be able to be with you like this."

"Idiot..."

Wan Er couldn't help but smile. She reached over to my waist and looked at me, "At first, I thought you were just a peeping b*st*rd, but... as the days passed, I realized that it was harder and harder for me to leave your side. Every minute without you seems like an eternity. To the point where, I don't even know why I had fallen for you..."

I smiled, "Now, if you put it that way, you're truly breaking my heart..."

Wan Er smiled back, "What, then give me a moment to think about why I like you..."

“Yup, think quickly.”

“Wu....” She leaned into my chest. She thought for a long moment, and then suddenly looked up with a smile, “Thinking is too hard. How about I think about it tomorrow...”

“What, that’s too irresponsible...”

She immediately gave me a pouty face, “You’re actually bullying me. You must not love me. What was it you said, you’d hold onto me forever, til death do we part...?”

I exclaimed, “Did I say that?”

“I dreamt it. You said it.”

“Alright alright, you win!”

.....

And like that, I held Wan Er as we looked out into the snow. I dipped my head and gave her a soft kiss. Wan Er’s face was a deep red. She was clearly very bashful. But, she then turned around and got on her tiptoes to give me a kiss. I could feel the heat from her body. As I kissed her, my left hand moved up to her chest, as though possessed by a demon. Even through her clothes, the mound felt soft and springy in my hands. The feeling gave me an incredibly satisfied and wonderful feeling in my heart. I could barely keep myself controlled.

“Ah...” When I let go, Wan Er let out a soft moan. It was as though she had been relieved. Her face was crimson now and she trembled. She looked down and didn’t dare to look into my face.

I could feel my breath getting heavier. I gave her another hug and then helped her button up the shirt in front of her chest. She looked down at what I was doing and then grinned, “I’m just about to go to sleep, what are you doing, helping me put on my clothes?”

I was struck by this unabashed joke, and then scratched my head, “What should I do then, should I help you take them off?”

Wan Er’s blush deepened. She then bravely said, “Yup, today you are

going to help me take off my clothes and put me to sleep. How does that sound?”

I felt a warm feeling rush through my body, as though I was about to explode. Of course, it was a feeling of happiness exploding. How could I not feel happy with such a beautiful and cute girlfriend?

Yup, it was time for me to step up and be a man!

I reached out to hold Wan Er's waist. The princess then leaned into my chest. We walked over to the bedside. “Pa!” We were tripped by the desk lamp's wire. Thankfully, I reacted quickly and hoisted Wan Er onto the bed. “Peng!” I fell against the bed and hit my head. Even though a blanket had covered it, I felt my head sting. I quickly got up. Everything was good!

Wan Er crawled up from the bed and looked at me, and asked, “Did you get hurt?”

I rubbed my head and smiled, “No problem. Hey, I'm someone who has practiced martial arts. My bones are as hard as steel. What is this little bump going to do to me?”

“But, I can already see the tears...” Wan Er reached out and rubbed the corner of my eye. She then licked it and smiled, “Salty...”

I was completely stunned. I then gave her a hug and smiled, “Good Wan Er, hurry up and go to sleep. I'll help you change...”

“Ok, alright then...”

I reached out and helped her take off her jacket. I then hung it on the hanger. Afterwards, I took off her white sweater. When I took it off, I noticed that she was wearing a thin shirt underneath. I could feel my heart beating, as though I couldn't make it past this obstacle. I felt my hand tremble a little as I helped her take off the silk shirt. Now, my girlfriend, dressed only in her underwear, was laying in my embrace. Wan Er's face was red as she trembled, “Alright, that's enough....”

I shamelessly smiled, “But there's more, you're not completely changed yet...”

“Idiot, what are you trying to do to me!” Wan Er smiled at me with an embarrassed look. I knew, as long as I wanted it, she would never say no. If a girl likes you, you could tell just from her eyes, and right now Wan Er’s eyes had the warmth of springs. I could see the deep love that she had for me. If I couldn’t, then I was an idiot.

However, I was in Wan Er’s house today. Lin Tian Nan and his crowd of bodyguards were still around. If I had done anything out of the ordinary... nevermind, there was still a lot of time!

I tucked Wan Er into her blankets. But, I still felt a little unsatisfied. And so, I leaned over to Wan Er and reached under the covers. With a forceful tug, I opened her robe and placed my cold hands on her mesmerizing body. I felt my heart stop. After a few seconds, time resumed and I gave her a soft kiss and smiled, “I’m going to sleep. When do we head back tomorrow?”

Wan Er smiled back, “Let’s go after lunch. I want to eat another meal with my dad. After lunch, we can head back. I know, you must be itching to go back and finish the daily quests, is that right?”

I gave an awkward smile, “Yup, your dad wants me to unify the seven kingdoms of the world. That’s not an easy task. I have to make sure I completely utilize the full potential of the Royal Army in order to do so. Otherwise, unifying the seven kingdoms is only a dream and would be completely unrealistic.”

“Yup!”

Wan Er nodded and then gave me a kiss, “Don’t worry idiot. Qing Qian and I, along with Li Mu, Wan Jian and all the others are here to help. This isn’t just your burden!”

“Yup!”

Chapter 770: New Year'S Battle

The next day, I had to resist the urge to rush back home and log onto the game, since I didn't bring the helmet with me. I followed Wan Er to the local shopping district for a stroll. She spent another couple dozen thousand on clothes and accessories. I was utterly defeated by her. Thankfully, her father was happily willing to pay for her clothes. After all, the assets from the Tian Jin Corporation were more than enough to satisfy her needs for many many lifetimes.

After lunch, I took Wan Er back to our apartment.

By the time we returned, it was already one in the afternoon. Dong Cheng had yet to come back. Most likely due to the fact that Dong Cheng wouldn't allow his precious daughter to leave too early. But, thinking about it, Dong Cheng was probably anxious to come back. Just as expected, I received a call from her before I even got the chance to log on. When she heard that Wan Er and I had returned, she then suggested that we all eat dinner together.

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Log on!

“Shua!”

I appeared in the middle of Tian Ling City. I summoned my Flying Scythe Horse. I leapt onto the saddle and charged straight towards the Royal Army camp. The guild chat was filled with new year's celebrations. I quickly sent out a group text to everyone, and then sent individual greetings to all of the core officers. After that, I turned off the communications device. I had just reached the Royal Army camp.

Outside of the camp, I saw a group of cavalrymen training their horseback riding. A group of them saw me and respectfully greeted me, “General!”

I nodded, “Continue!”

“Yes sir!”

I rode my Flying Scythe Horse straight into the camp. There was an enormous gap between the level of skill that each of the training grounds displayed when I first arrived. In one of the training grounds, I saw Han Yuan circling the grounds on his horse. He was training a group of barbarian soldiers the art of defense and advancing in the Shield Camp.

“General!”

Han Yuan had spotted me and shouted to me from a distance, “General’s finally here. I haven’t seen you for a day, and here I thought that the general had forgotten about us!”

I smiled, “How’s that possible? Never in a million years. How has the training been so far?”

Han Yuan patted his chest with pride, “Even though I can’t assure you that the battle power of the Royal Army is number one in the empire, but just our foot soldiers’ power is enough to get us into the top three. I think, that besides the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army’s elites, the Royal Army’s battle potential is number one!”

I nodded, “That’s good!”

Han Yuan then added, “General, when will we return to Dragon City?”

I said, “There’s no need for me to organize that. You guys decide. Everyday, we’ll pick two thousand men to scout the Ice Ridge Mountains. While they’re there, they can kill off some of the scattered monsters. Don’t forget to bring some good archers. By fortifying those areas, we can decrease some of the pressure on Ba Huang City and Dragon City.”

“Yes, I will immediately set that up! That’s right...”

Han Yuan walked forward and lowered his voice, “Long Xing went to the palace by himself today. Based on my friends in the guard, Long Xing went to see Prince Theodore. That b*st*rd must be planning something. He must’ve told the Crown Prince Theodore all about our training techniques!”

I smiled, "Its fine. The Royal Army is not ashamed of anything. After all, we aren't doing anything behind anyone's back. If Long Xing wants to make secret reports, then he can. As long as he doesn't turn his back on the Royal Army!"

"Yes sir!"

.....

Very soon, Han Yuan picked out a two thousand man scout team. Everyone brought with them a set amount of rations. Afterwards, they left the camp and went straight for the Ice Ridge Mountains. Despite this, I still felt worried. Tian Ling City must not only face the pressure from the main cities, Moon City, Port City, and Flame Cloud City, but it must also face ambushes from the Hybrid Demon Territory. This kind of pressure must be there to hone the experience of the players, right?

Right at that moment, I heard Li Mu's voice from the guild chat——

Li Mu: "D*mn, are the Japanese players from Port City really making a move? What the f*ck do they mean, they're coming out to hunt. Do they think we're some free city?! Where they can take whatever the f*ck quests they want?"

I asked, "Li Mu, what's going on?"

Li Mu said, "Port City is owned by the Japanese and the Koreans. The second strongest Japanese guild——New Moon has over 100,000 players. They're known to be almost on par with the number one guild Casualty. And so, they're particularly arrogant. The vice guildmaster of New Moon, Battle Thunder, recently entered into Tian Ling City territory by himself and hunted down several Chinese Players. At first, only a dozen of them came. After that, several hundred came in and another thousand. Today, over ten thousand Japanese players entered. It's as though they're trying to chase us out from the War God River territories!"

I clenched my teeth, "They're being that showy?"

Li Mu replied, "Exactly. It gets even worse. New Moon would shout, saying that if any Chinese player entered the map south of the War God

River, they would kill them without mercy. New Moon does what they say they will do. How could we stand that kind of shame?"

Wan Jian replied, "We cannot!"

I smiled back, "Yup, we cannot!"

Wan Er smiled and joined in, "Seeing as we can't, how about [Zhan Long] make the first strike? Either way, it's already been half a month since we've had a guild event. Let's all go to the south War God River and hunt. All of our main players should go!"

I grunted in agreement, "Sounds good. Have all ten thousand of our Steel Blade Cavalry come out of the nest. If New Moon plans on being this arrogant, then clearly, they have something up their sleeve. Port City would not stop at just putting one branch of soldiers within our city limits. Once we attack, it's best if Enemies at the Gate, Judgement and Prague are all notified. That way, they can provide assistance. If New Moon plans on being this outrageous, then let's kill all the Port City players in our territory!"

Li Mu laughed, "I agree! Let me make the arrangements. As for our battle plan, Guildmaster and Vice guildmaster can discuss that!"

I glanced at the map and said, "There's no need to go to the Magic Bamboo Forest. We'll go around from the Bridge of Fate. It'll take us two hours to get south of the War God River. Let's give them a surprise!"

"Yes sir!"

.....

As [Zhan Long] prepared for battle, I sent a message to Ye Lai, Yan Zhao Warrior and Misty Clouds. Everyone gathered together. The large guilds all prepared their armies, and we all ran straight for the Southern Map of the War God River. We cannot let the Japanese continue killing our Chinese players! Otherwise, they'll actually think there's nobody here to guard the Chinese Servers!"

I replenished my potion and card supply. Afterwards, I urged my horse out of the city gates. Within ten minutes, there were over seven thousand men gathered outside. Since it was late in the evening, gathering together nine thousand Steel Blade Horsemen was no problem. After a few calls, I'm sure that we'll be able to get ten thousand. At that point, it'd be more than enough to make those Port City players eat their own words!

Wan Er and Dong Cheng both arrived, bringing along the mages, archers and healers with them. Within half an hour, I lead the Steel Blade Horsemen in an advance, and we protected all of the players who weren't mounts at the center of our formation.

Not long after, our army passed across the Bridge of Fate, over the War God's River. There, we entered the Xia Yu Army camp. We went around the acres of military stations and then rushed straight towards the southern map of the War God's River. We progressed very quickly on the main roads. As we advanced, I recounted all of the manpower we had. This time, [Zhan Long] brought 27,000+ players. The whole hive was coming out. We lead the charge, while [Judgement], [Prague] and [Enemies at the Gate] followed from behind. This time, our mission was very simple, and that was to deal one heavy blow to Port City. If we don't show them a little muscle, they'll think we could be bullied!

.....

Before us, a soft breeze swayed through the trees and branches. South of the War God River was a grass plain. It was a zone that crossed with the forest. Further ahead was an incredibly deep canyon. There was a simple drawbridge across that canyon. Any constructions in the game weren't easily broken, unless it had taken a large by a city weapon. Thus, our entourage could easily pass over it without spending too much time.

Since this was a simple activity, our operation went by quickly and smoothly. And , to top it off, we did a fairly good job keeping it a secret. We had done so well that when we appeared on the southern map, most of the Korean players we met on the way were completely caught off guard when they saw.

“Look!”

Yao Yan raised her long sword and pointed forward, “There’s a team of Japanese players that are grinding levels. It looks like there’s around 200+ of them. Should we attack?”

I nodded, “This is the Chinese Server territory. They must’ve already prepared themselves for the chance to be killed if they’re here. Attack!”

I swung my blade and charged forward with a group of Steel Blade Horsemen. The Japanese players were thrown into chaos. Quite a few of the horsemen jumped onto their mounts and ran. They didn’t even bother to think about their team mates. In the end, however, they were still killed in the rush of our cavalry.

Qing Qian pulled out her dagger and appeared beside me. She looked into my eyes and said, “Brother Xiao Yao, the moment we attack, they’ll all be notified. [New Moon]’s main force is about a thousand yards away. Its around an eight thousand man team. What should we do. Should we immediately charge at them, or should we wait for our ranged players before we make a move?”

I asked, “We’re sure that there’s only 8000 of them?”

Qing Qian nodded, “Yup. The other fourteen thousand are five thousand yards away killing some [House of Prestige] players. They won’t get here anytime soon!”

I immediately raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and shouted, “Steel Blade Horsemen, charge with me! Let’s crush these eight thousand Japs!”

Everyone pulled out their blades. Over 9000 of [Zhan Long]’s Steel Blade Horsemen activated and they charged all at once. Furthermore, Wan Er, Qing Qian, Dancing Forest and Wolf stepped up as well. All of the high level assassins had their [Unrivaled Spirit] effect, which gave them the ability to dash forward at the same speed.

Our hooves thundered through the brush. When nine thousand of the horsemen arrived on the plains, we could see the eight thousand awaiting us in formation. Their mages, archers, and musketeers created a net of

firepower. Looks like they were expecting us.

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I swung my blade and ordered, “Moon Elf Steel Blade Horsemen, you’re now Team One. Everyone else, follow behind them. Today is New Year’s. I wish everyone a happy new year, let’s win this battle!”

Chapter 771: Massacring [New Moon]

“Archers, prepare. [Scatter Shot], release!”

Near the forest, one of the team leaders from [New Moon] shouted, “Don’t let them charge past the firenet! Stun, sleep, do whatever you have to do to stop their advance. Mages prepare to use your [Lullaby]! Knights, hold your ground. We cannot allow the enemy past our front lines!”

“Shua shua shua...”

The twangs of bowstrings rang out in the battlefield. A rain of [Scatter Shot]s fell from the night sky, landing right in the middle of [Zhan Long]s charge. Meng Yao and Yue Yao Yan were side by side at the lead of the group. A group of other pretty female knights created a defensive formation that covered for the rest of the team. There were at least a thousand Moon Elves riding amongst the Steel Blade Horsemen!

“Pu Pu Pu...”

Several people had been stunned by the [Scatter Shot]s. I could hear the back row of knights ramming into each other as they forced their way past their stunned brothers. Even so, those arrows did not stop our advance. Meng Yao and Yao Yan continued leading the charge at the enemy’s front line. Most of the [Lullaby]s cast by their mages had been dodged. After all, it needs to be targeted before being cast, and the Steel Blade Horsemen traveled far too quickly for the mages to predict their movements. Most of the time, they couldn't even lock their spells onto our knights.

Yao Yan’s pretty face revealed an excited expression. She raised her long sword and threw a [Skysaker Stab] right into the crowd, “Charge through their Shield formation!”

The Moon Elf Knights all raised their shields in front of their chest. “Peng peng peng,” They rammed into the enemy's formation. Just from that initial charge, they managed to push the group of the [New Moon] knights backwards into retreat.

“Now it's our turn!”

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade with a smile, “Charge! Don't waste the sacrifice our sisters in the front have made!”

During the first round of attacks by the Moon Elf Cavalry, we had naturally lost quite a few people. At least a hundred had died. However, the enemy's loss was ten times our own. Li Mi, Wang Jian, Old K, and Death God's Elegy followed close behind, and dealt a brutal blow right after the Moon Elves. Most of our warriors were swordsmen. If we were to say that the Moon Elf Cavalry was our shield, then the rest of our cavalry is our sword, and one strong enough to deal the wrath of a death God upon our enemies!

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash] into the Shield Formation and then ordered, “Do not hesitate. Charge right through them. Use your [Flying Sword] and your [Sword Break] skills to deal the most damage. We cannot give them the chance to deal a counter attack!”

I swung my Dragon Reservoir sword, and hacked into the crowd of people. Everyone before me turned into a sea of blood. Li Mu and Wang Jian were close behind me, dealing a [Covering Sword Slash] and [Halberd Whirlwind] into the enemy lines. Wan Er's [Blade of the Death God] dealt explosive damage to her targets. While Wei Liang, Qing Qian and Wolf had activated their [Unwavering Spirit], dealing enormous amounts of damage. Just from the three's stats, the [New Moon] players were not of any threat to them.

“Hold them off!”

A group of [New Moon] knights gathered together and formed a tight group, as though attempting to stop our charge. Qing Qian lunged into the air, her nimble body twisting as she opened her pale hand and smiled, “Destroy!”

Flames burst and ravaged through the air. Firefox claws ripped through the flames and slashed through the crowd. A level 13 [Grip of the Firefox] exploded in the crowd of people, dealing over 15000 damage. Li Mu and I took the chance and activated our [Blade Rush] to charge forward. All of

the New Moon knights who had been left with critical health from the initial attack were now shattered by our follow up. Old K then threw a [Whirlwind Slash], finishing off any survivors.

The reality was, that while [New Moon] was number two in the Japanese servers, there was no way they could stand against nine thousand of [Zhan Long]'s Steel Blade Horsemen. Even if these soldiers weren't part of our main forces, I still had complete confidence that we could break through their first line of defense. If we really couldn't, then we could just activate the two BUFFs from our two nation level weapons. At that point, nobody could stand before [Zhan Long]!

.....

The forest before us was now drowned in a sea of blood. Li Mu and the twelve others who were outfitted in the Deer Cry Armor were our enemy's nightmare. Furthermore, the fifteen hundred players who wore the Black Flame Outfits made up the core of our cavalry, leaving no opportunity for a counterattack from our enemies. We couldn't be killed, nor defeated. And our enemies certainly could not escape!

“Ka Cha!”

My Dragon Reservoir Sword cut through the throat of an enemy knight. Without waiting for his reaction, I swept my Zhen Yue Blade forward, and nearly cut his body in half. He was instantly killed. My Flying Scythe Horse let out a cry. It was only then that I realized I had already cut through the enemy's formation. I charged through the Shield Formation and hit the mages and archers in the back. Behind me, a group of Steel Blade Horsemen continued their attack.

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and shouted, “Charge forward! Once you reach the end, recreate the formation. We must decrease our losses!”

Li Mu, Wang Jian, Old K, and Bai Qi all understood that they could not become consumed by the battle. One after another, they charged forward, and disentangled themselves from the battle. Matcha raised her Lion King Shield and rammed her way past a dozen or so people. There wasn't a hint of fear in her face. With the Lion King Shield in her hands, she was on a

completely different level from the players trying to kill her. There was no way they could manage to take her life. Li Mu dashed forward and helped Matcha kill the straggling survivors. Quite a few people had forgotten to use their [Pardon Cards].

At the rear of the enemy formation, there were around four thousand Steel Blade Horsemen turning their horses around. One after another, the horses stomped their feet and neighed. Their masters kicked their sides, activating another [Charge]. This was the second round. It had only been ten minutes since the first charge and we were throwing a second round of attacks on them. They probably never would have imagined that a main force from the Chinese Server would appear in the southern parts of the War God's River.

Close to forty minutes later, we had dealt three consecutive charges. Finally, of the original eight thousand [New Moon] players, there were only three hundred who managed to escape. The rest had died. Darling Duck and Thousand Suns who lead the ranged players had finally caught up to us. Seeing them put my worries to rest. All 27,000 of [Zhan Long]'s players had arrived. The Japanese players would have to bring at least a hundred thousand of their own elites before they could deal any kind of critical damage to us. Otherwise, any force they send at us was just coming to their deaths. On top of that, they must be the elites from the main guild. If a hundred thousand second rate players came at us, [Zhan Long] would massacre them all!

.....

Li Mu lead the guild to sweep the battlefield, while reviving any players that had died in battle. Once they had finished, he lead his horse to me and said, "Xiao Yao, what's next? I received intel that [New Moon] still has around 15,000 players left. They're all located in the Pan Long Peak. They just finished off a thousand man team from [Vanguard] and are now pushing towards our direction. Should we fight, or not?"

I asked, "Do we have any information about the map just south from us?"

Li Mu shook his head, "It's not within my information net."

Qing Qian smiled, "I've got that! Just an hour ago, around 200,000 Japanese players were headed this way from that direction. It seems that Port City has received news of the bloodbath. Their forums are abuzz, talking about the 8000 man main force that we had just massacred. They're all feeling indignant and are threatening to charge across the War God River and bathe the Chinese territories in blood!"

I smiled, "They want a bloodbath with just 200,000 people? Well there's an international joke. It'd make a little more sense if they were going to use those 200,000 to just deal with [Zhan Long], but we have [Judgement], [Enemies at the Gate], [Prague], and [Blood Contract] with us. These 200,000 are just here to die!"

Dong Cheng raised her Deer Cry Staff and smiled, "Could it be that they have some other move? Both the Koreans and the Japanese share Port City, and yet only the Japanese are acting. Are the Koreans just going to stand on the sidelines and watch?"

Wan Er smiled, "Well, what else would they do? The Korean players have always hated the Japanese. They've already been fighting nonstop in their city. Now that the Japanese are playing their hand, I suspect that the Koreans will probably just stand on the sidelines and watch the excitement."

Li Mu said, "Vice guildmaster's reasoning makes sense, the Koreans do hate the Japanese. That much is very clear."

Qing Qian grinned, "Thinking about it, the Koreans are pretty strong. Then... just how strong is the North Korean server? What city are they based in anyway?"

I smiled, "God, don't even talk about them. Destiny hasn't approved the North Korean server. There isn't a single player from there..."

Li Mu gripped his blade as a hot blooded look came into his expression, "Well... I really do sympathize with those people. Nevermind, we'll just help them kill off more of these Port City trash..."

I nodded, "Sounds good!"

Li Mu said, "After all of that, Xiao Yao, you haven't yet said what we're doing next. We've already cleared the battlefield and there's another 15,000 elite players from [New Moon] heading towards us too. Apparently, it's personally lead by the vice guildmaster, Battle Thunder. The guildmaster, Demon Moon is leading another team of elites towards the War God's River. We don't have their exact location at the moment."

I looked over at the map. Our current location was just south of the War God's River. We were in a nameless forest between the Peerless Swamp and the Starry Marshes. Pan Long Peak was just north of us, which was around seven hundred meters higher than our in altitude. They were most likely going to utilize their downward momentum to supplement their charging force!

I looked behind me at the powerful Steel Blade Cavalry and made my decision with a smile, "Let's go! Towards the North! We'll face the other branch first. That'll give me a chance to see just what that arrogant vice guildmaster is like. He actually threatened to chase the Chinese Players to the North! "

Matcha raised her Lion King Shield and walked over to me, "However, my most beloved Boss, they have the upper hand, since they are attacking downwards. You must've thought of that already, isn't that right?"

I nodded and then lowered my voice, "Yes, that's why speed is crucial in a war. By waiting here, we're only giving them even more time to assemble themselves. If we don't take this chance to charge at them and face them at the center of the mountain, then we'll be able to decrease their force. We won't let a single one of them come down."

Matcha looked closely at my face and smiled, "Boss, are you planning on fighting a defensive battle first and then charging?"

"Smart, you figured it out!"

"....."

Chapter 772: Doing the Opposite

Under my orders, [Zhan Long]'s army split into three different sections. The first was the shield formation, lead by Matcha, Meng Yao, Yue Yao Yan , and Death God's Elegy. They stood at the front and acted as our defenses. The second wave was the main battle power, made up of Wan Er, Dong Cheng, Qing Qian and the others. The third was Li Mu, Wang Jian, Old K, Bai Qi, Moon Feather, Star Blade and I as the Steel Blade Horsemen Team. Our target was simple, we would borrow the strength of the Lion King Shield to shatter the first wave of attack from our enemy. At that point, our ranged players would destroy their defenses, while the third wave attacks. In one swift execution, we'd disperse this 15,000 man army. And this time, all 27,000 of [Zhan Long]'s army will participate. Our greatest advantage was in numbers, and was also one of the reasons why we chose to fight this battle.

.....

“Hu hu....”

A strong wind blew across the plains. As we pushed forward, the terrain became higher and higher. In the distance, I could see the long unbroken mountain range. It looked like an enormous dragon emerging from the clouds. That must be where the name Pan Long Peak came from. The monsters in this map were around Level 130-145. Around half a month ago, it was one of the main grinding maps for the players in the Chinese Server. However, it was now being dominated by the Japanese, a humiliation that we could not tolerate. So today, we were taking back what was rightfully ours!

My Flying Scythe Horse snorted and stepped forward. It was starting to adjust to the steepening path. Several of the Steel Blade Horsemen behind me were also adjusting. I was starting to feel apprehensive as the slope steepened. The altitude of this slope had already surpassed my expectations. If the [New Moon]'s cavalry charged at us from here, it would certainly pose a threat to us. Battle Thunder must be thinking the same thing, which is why he chose to charge downhill. But today, [Zhan

Long]'s going to be stubborn and break New Moon's teeth when they try to take a bite out of us. We've got to show them that the Chinese Server can also annihilate them at any time!

.....

I could feel the earth rumble slightly under our feet. It was getting stronger and stronger as the enemy drew close. Li Mu pulled out his blade and looked into the distance, "[New Moon]'s force is about to show."

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and shouted, "Halt. We'll set up our formation here!"

All of the knight players slid off their horses and rammed their shields into the ground, creating a shield formation. This way, even though we ended up sacrificing the stats of some of our knights, we'll be able to stop the charge of their footsoldiers. This will be a nightmare for our knights, especially since there may be reinforcements from the back.

Wan Er raised her dagger and shouted, "BUFF everyone in the front row. Hurry, time is of the essence!"

So, one after another, the [Hundred Battles] BUFF descended on the front row. The chanting of our monk players also rose up over the crowd. The light from [Holy Blessing] was cast over our troops, increasing our health recovery rate by 100%.

After waiting for around five minutes, we finally saw the first [New Moon] players appear on the horizon. Wang Jian took a deep breath, 'There's around 8,000 heavy knights. All players of other classes are behind them. They're most likely planning on using the eight thousand heavy cavalry to divide our forces and then deal with us piece by piece. Look, the man in the front is Battle Thunder!'

I squinted and saw a Level 135 Swordsman standing at the very front, waving his blade. I could tell from the brilliant glint of his armor that it was special. Furthermore, he was mounted on a ferocious red battle horse that was covered in flames. From the looks of it, Battle Thunder's reputation as the third strongest player in the Japanese Battle Net wasn't for nothing. I wondered how good his technique and maneuvers were.

They're probably pretty good. Otherwise he wouldn't be ranked so highly.

"They're here!"

Matcha looked over at me and said, "Boss, when should I activate the [Lion King Shield]?"

I smiled, "Activate it when the close ranged players make contact. Everyone, prepare. If necessary, I'll use the Zen Yue Blade BUFF as well. But, a mere [New Moon] guild shouldn't push us to that point!"

I patted my Flying Scythe Horse' head and had it retreat. I then split up the close combat players into two groups. I lead one group to our left flank while Li Mu took the other group to the right. The front lines were held by Matcha and three thousand other Steel Blade Horsemen. Eight thousand of the New Moon Cavalry were about to reach us in their charge. Their speed was incredibly fearsome. One could just imagine the impact force that would result from this!

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Standing on the right flank, I couldn't see the situation on the frontlines very clearly. All I could hear was the violent sounds of shields ramming against each other. The noise rose up over the battlefield. I could tell it wasn't far from where I was located. Their force of impact had far surpassed my expectations. It had directly sent the first row of Steel Blade horsemen flying into the sky, hitting straight into the second row. They hadn't stopped until they hit the third row. At that point, Dancing Forest, Thousand Suns, and Xing Lie all activated their skills, killing everyone in their path!

I looked at the small dots on the map. Only the first three to four rows of [Zhan Long]'s formation had lost their position. All in all, we were able to hold our ground. Matcha had already activated her [Lion King Shield], increasing our defensive strength exponentially. That marked the first of Battle Thunder's miscalculations. He had originally planned on completely breaking apart [Zhan Long]'s formation with one charge. However, he had underestimated the strength of our defenses, and he had overestimated their own battle potential.

“Keng!”

I pulled my Dragon Reservoir Sword and raised the blade, ordering, “Launch our attack! Both flanks, wrap around the enemy formation and kill them all!”

The other Steel Blade Horsemen all raised their sword and echoed, “Kill them all!”

Hooves stomped across the slope and we launched our charge. Despite our uphill disadvantage, our impact was as fearsome as ever. We split up into two forces, cornering New Moon in a pincer attack, which was extremely painful for them. At the very least, Battle Thunder would’ve never imagined that [Zhan Long] would dare to make a move like this and go to battle in the middle of the slope. He most likely hadn’t met another Chinese guild who took risks like us.

“Hong!”

Wrapped in the light of a [Seven Star Fragment Slash], my Zhen Yue Blade cut through the crowd. I charged straight into the chaos alone with my Ancient Heavenly Tiger. Old K, Moon Feather, and Star Blade followed behind and rushed forward. The Steel Blade Horsemen, clothed in black, followed in step, the light from their Black Flame Set flashing. The light itself was an effect from the [Blazing Flame] effect. After sacrificing close to a hundred of our knights to break through the enemy’s formation, we were able to deal a critical blow to them as soon as we entered.

I fought as quickly as I could, killing everyone in my path. Charging into a formation had nothing to do with technique, but rather the actions of hacking away at your enemies. I used my [Drain] to recover my health, dealing the strongest blows against my enemies. I, as well as the other core [Zhan Long] members, were incredibly fierce. We cut through like a sharp dagger, straight into [New Moon]’s formation. By splitting our forces, we were effectively able to divide [New Moon]’s troops into three parts!

“D*mm*t!”

I could see Battle Thunder raging in the distance. There was nothing he

could do to save the situation. All he could do was kill as many of our Steel Blade Horsemen as he could. There was no other way, we could only let him continue while Li Mu and I used the chance to kill even more of his men!

Matcha, Yue Yao Yan, One Second Hero, and Death God's Elegy all slid off their horses. They then escorted Dong Cheng, Thousand Suns, and Xing Lie as well as the other ranged players towards the heart of the enemy formation to deal the killing stroke. The [New Moon] players would truly understand what it means to fight for your life. While they had the advantage in the terrain, we still managed to completely dissolve it with our high defense.

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Not long after, the Steel Blade Horsemen was starting to receive the enemy's ranged attack. No matter what though, we continued to advance. Losses were hard to avoid in this battle, but our vengeance could only be quenched with victory!

"Pu Chi!"

I plunged my Zhen Yue Blade into the abdomen of a [New Moon] knight. Then, with a sweep of my blade, I cut through his body and continued charging forward. Before my eyes I saw a group of archers and mages, all together. They were lead by a high level archer as the team leader. He looked to be around 25 years old. His eyes widened when he saw me and he shouted, "See that man wielding a blade along with his pet? That's this guild's guild master! Focus your firepower on him. Use [Scatter Shot], [Lullaby], everything you can to stop him!"

I smiled inwardly at their naivete. I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and dashed forward in a zigzag, cutting right into their formation. There were over five hundred ranged players, all concentrated here. I could misdirect their firepower onto myself to assist the other Steel Blade Horsemen!

"Shua Shua Shua..."

Countless arrows missed. I couldn't completely dodge all of them. As before, the [Scatter Shots] fell upon my Hidden Dragon Armor. MISSES

flew up over my head. Of course, there were some that I hadn't dodged. "Shua!" An emerald wall would rise up before my face. What was originally a stun effect was nullified by my [Brave Heart] effect from my Hero's Helmet. The me today could take any number of stuns!

Of course, these Japanese players would've never expected me to have a Demon Harvest Weapon like the Hero's Helmet. In the end, they had completely wasted all of their cool downs and firepower all on me. When they finally realized their mistake, it was all too late. The Valiant Bravery and Zhan Long camps were both at their doorstep!

"Kill!"

Wang Jian swung his blade and roared. The Steel Blade Horsemen wrecked havoc as they charged forward. It was as though they were killing a group of lambs as they hacked away at the [New Moon]'s ranged players. The speed at which they were dropping was far quicker than we had expected. Additionally, Wan Er, Dong Cheng, Qing Qian and the others moved quickly. They all cut into the heart of the enemy and quickly dissolved their defenses. Twenty seven thousand [Zhan Long] players had completely and utterly destroyed the fifteen thousand [New Moon] players in one fell swoop. We hadn't given our enemies a single chance to launch a counterattack.

Even the vice guildmaster had been killed by Wan Er and Qing Qian. Two hands will never beat four. Not to mention the fact that Wan Er and Qing Qian were both extremely strong players. Battle Thunder's death was not meaningless, it was only fitting that the third strongest player in the Japanese Battlenet be killed in the chaos. That was where he belonged. In other words... the third strongest player in the Chinese Battlenet was the Pulse Break Master, Little Demon. She probably wouldn't fare any better, after all, she would most likely die under an array of arrows.

.....

"Die!"

I received a message from the [Prague] guildmaster, Yan Zhao Warrior, "Li Xiao Yao, did you guys just defeat the [New Moon] forces on Pan Long

Peak?”

I replied, “Yea, what’s up?”

“Nothing, they have around seventy thousand players close to the abyss, just behind you. [Prague] and [Judgement] have begun the battle. Finish up your business in Pan Long Peak quickly!”

“Alright, understood. Hold them off!”

“Don’t worry, we aren’t that weak!”

“Ha ha!”

Chapter 773: The Peak of Power

We were engaged in battle for an entire three hours. Midway up the Pan Long Peak, there were fewer and fewer [New Moon] members. In the end, of the fifteen thousand they had brought there were only a few hundred who still survived. As before, they held on to the fight. The players from [New Moon] were all top players in Port City and they would never easily accept defeat, much less defeat at the hands of a single guild like [Zhan Long]. This kind of humiliation was too much.

The battle dragged on, but [Zhan Long] managed to maintain our numbers. The players who had been killed in battle were slowly being revived. After three hours, the field was littered with the bodies of [New Moon] players. Whenever they tried to revive, they were immediately crushed by the Steel Blade Horsemen. After a while, they learned their lesson and stopped trying.

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“Quickly clear the battlefield!” I said into the guild chat.

Li Mu lead his horse forward with his bloody Zhen Hai Blade and laughed, “Xiao Yao, how satisfying was this battle?”

I nodded with a smile, “Not bad. We managed to deal a critical defeat to [New Moon], even when we fought head on. This was the ending that I was hoping for. Hmph, they actually dared to trespass into our territory and kill our people. They show absolutely no respect for our players!”

Wan Er pointed towards the map at the War God River which divided our territories and said, “The river here is incredibly powerful and relentless. It’s a natural barrier between us. On top of that, there isn’t a passage like the Bridge of Fate for them to use. That’s why it takes our Chinese players two to three hours before they could reach this map. I’m thinking that it was purposely designed this way. Perhaps, when they were designing the maps, they were already planning on leaving these territories the Port City and Flame Cloud City players, rather than the Chinese.”

Her words made complete sense to me, “I agree, it looks to be that way. However, they won’t get this piece of land that easily. [Zhan Long] has already arrived on the Southern territories, and there’s no reason we should give up on this territory so easily. But, it’s a little unfortunate....”

“What’s unfortunate?” Li Mu asked with a raised brow.

I rested my Zhen Yue Blade in the grass and smiled, “It’s unfortunate that there isn’t a single place that is decent for us to get a foothold. If there was.... We could let a few of the guilds camp in these maps. That way, we wouldn’t have to travel so far just to fight over here.”

Li Mu wryly smiled, “Yea, there really isn’t. In the past fifteen days, Tian Ling City has spawned two player cities. [Zhan Long] hasn’t fought over any of them, after all, there’s no point. The two player cities are relatively close to Tian Ling City, so there isn’t much practical use for them. [Legend], [Hero’s Mound] and [Vanguard] didn’t even fight for it. Otherwise, it wouldn’t have been snatched away by [Prague] and [Judgement]....”

I smiled, “What do you mean? [Judgement] and [Prague] are pretty strong guilds. But if a player city does end up spawning here, then we must aid any Chinese Guild that tries to fight for it. We’ll use that player city as a springboard. That way, we could continuously teleport players here and grab the first city when the country wars open up!”

Li Mu smiled and confidently said, “Even if we don’t have a player city, we can still launch an attack when the country battles activate. We’ll attack either Flame Cloud City or Port City first, and then push forward, giving them no chance to retreat.”

I nodded, “Let’s wait and see what happens when the country battles does open... Hurry up and clear the field. We need to prepare to press south. [Prague], [Judgement], and some of the other guilds have been holding off 70,000 soldiers. It must be quite a strain on them. Besides, the Japanese players of Port City must have already heard the news about us. There’s over nine million Japanese players registered to Port City, which is not a small number by any means. Now that we’ve poked the hornet’s

nest, we may even have to face armies as large as four million soldiers!”

Li Mu raised his blade and quivered with excitement. He laughed, “So what! Even if they throw four million players at us, we’ll kill them all! Think of it as a precursor to the country battles!”

“Ok!”

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Very soon, [Zhan Long] quickly finished clearing the battlefield. Fifteen thousand [New Moon] players were lying on the ground; none were reviving anymore. Despite that, we had to prepare to face an enemy from behind. Once they revived, they could form a strong army, and could very well deal a critical attack at us from behind. After all, it wasn’t the country battles yet. Once the players die, they could still revive limitlessly.

Nine thousand Steel Blade Horsemen were neatly lined up in rows. Li Mu and I lead the army southward. Close to thirty thousand people left Pan Long Peak all at once, entering the plains just below the mountain. I could already see the chaotic battle ensuing in the distance. [Judgement], [Prague], [Enemies at the Gate], and [Blood Contract] were entangled in battle with the Japanese!

“Go, go and look!”

I quickly dashed forward on my Flying Scythe Horse, leaving the formation and charging straight towards the battlefield. When I was around five hundred yards from the chaos, I could already smell the thick scent of blood. At the same time, I noticed from the map that [Judgement], [Prague] and the other guilds were set up on the western side. They were in the middle of sending out their cavalry in a charge. The Japanese guilds were gathering from the east and the west, bringing their total to around a hundred thousand. All in all, their battle power did not match their enemy’s. It would be hard for them to defeat a high level guild like [Prague] in a short amount of time. Actually, it be hard for them to even drag the battle out and not end in defeat.

“Keng!”

I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and pointed at a corner in the east. I then ordered in the [Zhan Long] guild chat, “Steel Blade Horsemen, follow me! Let’s strike the foot of their formation and scatter them! Wan Er, you take the ranged players and push forward. Give the [Hundred Battles] buff to everyone and let’s set off!”

The light from the BUFFs descended upon our army. In the next moment, all nine thousand Steel Blade Horsemen charged out behind me. They raised their sharp weapons as we crossed the field towards the enemy. Shortly after, we could see [Judgement], [Prague], and [Enemies at the Gate] cheering when they saw us. After a long battle, they were waiting for [Zhan Long] to come and deal the finishing blow—

‘It’s the Steel Blade Horsemen! [Zhan Long]’s main force. Ha Ha, Xiao Yao and General Li Mu have brought their armies!’

“Charge! Support the Steel Blade Horsemen!”

“Kill! Kill them all! Leave no mercy!”

.....

The sounds of battle rose up, and the plains were drowned in a sea of blood.

War horses thundered across the field. I lead the charge at the very front. With a swing of my Zhen Yue Blade, I cut down a knight who was at half health. With another swing of my Dragon Reservoir Sword, I hacked down people around me left and right. Once I activated [Sword Tempest] not a single person dared to come close to me. My war horse stomped the ground, activating [Ice Domain], freezing an entire group of Port City Japanese players into icicles. Matcha, Li Mu, and Wang Jian then charged forward and cut them all down, shattering their statues. While there were less than ten thousand Steel Blade Horsemen, the impact of our charge was more than enough to make these second rate guilds shudder in fear. There wasn’t a single person who could hold their stance against our massacre!

“Grrr!”

My Ancient Heavenly Tiger let out a roar and tackled the crowd. Quite a few people died under its sharp claws. The tiger let out a [Burstfire Raid] into the crowd, followed with a [Flame Roar]!

“Peng peng peng....”

Meng Yao, Matcha, Yue Yao Yan and the other knight girls all raised their shields and rammed against the enemy’s defense. They pierced their sharp swords into the enemy lines. With this single charge, the near hundred thousand players from Port City’s right flank defense had completely loosened. Closely after that, we ripped an enormous breach into their formation. At that moment, Wan Er quickly lead the ranged players from [Zhan Long] and pushed in, leaving the enemy defenseless.

In the distance, I could hear Ye Lai’s roar. He hacked apart a group of people with his battle axe. The axe suddenly burst into flames and he dashed forward. White light flew up as his enemies fell. That b*st*rd really had no mercy when he killed people!

A group of Frost Ram Knights surged forward behind Ye Lai. Their killing power was also extremely strong, and was nearly on par with our Steel Blade Horsemen. The only difference was that they had fewer numbers. On the other side, Yan Zhao Warrior charged forward, leading an army of black battle horsemen. Yan Zhao called them the Dragon Sword Horsemen. There were only four thousand in existence so far, but it was already starting to show promise in becoming a great army. This was the jack that [Prague] held!

“Hong!”

Green light flew up above the crowd. This was a particularly familiar skill. It was Mist Cloud’s [Azure Dragon Arm] and [Flying Sword]. With a single sweep of his sword, he was able to take the life of his enemy. Misty Cloud swung his sword and surged forward, leading a group of elite knights into the crowd of enemies. Furthermore, I noticed that all of the knights from [Enemies at the Gate] had the exact same mount. It was a special type of battle horse called “Dark Swamp Beast”. Since the name wasn’t very elegant, he renamed the cavalry of ten thousand men “Dragon

Knights”, a much more impressive, albeit misleading name

On the other side, the guild master of [Blood Contract] Han Bei Song lead his own knights in a charge. There weren't any particularly unique sets or mounts for their cavalry, after all, everyone's mount was different. There was everything from wild mules to battle bears. The sight was somewhat chaotic. Even so, the guild master smiled widely and shouted, “Charge! Brothers of the alliance, make way, let our Blood Contract cavalry also have a chance in the spotlight!”

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All of the cavalries from each of the great guilds pushed forward. In the end, the hundred thousand players from Port City could not hold their formation against our forces. All they could do was fall back or scatter, resulting in a loose defense. Players ran into each other and were crushed. There was no way they could hold against our barrage of attacks.

Victory came a little quicker than I had initially expected. After an hour of attack, seventy thousand corpses lay at our feet. The rest were already retreating back to their own territory.

Each of our guilds began to sweep the battlefield. Yan Zhao warrior, Ye Lai and the other guild masters expressed their gratitude to Zhan Long. I responded to them that we were only doing what an ally should. Besides, our bravery and sacrifices were for the sake of our country's dignity, and had nothing to do with our personal grievances or benefits.

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Right at that moment, I received a message from the number one player in China—Fang He Que!

“Xiao Yao, did you guys do something? Why is it that the Port City Japanese players have been gathering like crazy. There's already two million of them all concentrated together!”

I exclaimed, “Two million? Looks like they’re acknowledging our prowess...”

Fang Ge Que asked, “Is this a full on battle?”

“It seems like it is.”

Usually, Fang Ge Que carefully considered his actions and never fights a meaningless battle. However, this time seemed to be the exception, “I'm giving orders to Enchanted Painting to gather our armies. You guys hold your positions, you may have to face all two million Port City players on your own for the next 2-3 hours.”

“OK, don't worry!”

I subconsciously smiled, this time, even Fang Ge Que decided to discard his neutral stance and show his hand!

Chapter 774: Japs

As we cleared the battlefield, we met other knights who were doing the same. Since everyone was an ally, there were few conflicts over the spoils. Plus, most of the players that were killed were all second rate, so most of their equipment was fairly common. There was no point in getting into an argument over some trash equipment. Of course, there were still a few disagreements, but they were all resolved by Ye Lai, Wan Er and the others.

I received several messages all at once. Simple, Mu Xuan, and Tang Qi were all coming to me with news from the War God River. Our battle situation had completely rocked the entire Chinese Server. Once they found out that there was a battle for them to fight, [Vanguard], [Appearance Alliance], and [Hero's Mound] all began to gather their armies. Not long from now, these plains would undergo another battle, one on a completely higher scale!

.....

I gripped my Dragon Reservoir Sword as I wandered around the battlefield. I continued to organize teams and formations, preparing us for battle. Li Mu, Wang Jian, and the others all lead their own thousand man troops. In terms of military rankings, all of them were at least considered Majors, while I lead nine thousand Steel Blade Horsemen on my own, similar to a Colonel. That wasn't a bad title at all.

Right then, I couldn't help but think of the twenty thousand men in the Royal Army. If they were here, maybe they would be able to help us teach those Japanese players a lesson. But thinking about it carefully, I decided against it. Even though their training had been effective, it still wasn't enough to pit them against top level players. Especially when facing against a cavalry. Situations such as those would easily turn against our favor. Once an NPC dies, they can't revive. I didn't want them to die so easily, so soon. We should keep them on reserve for future battles and wait until each of the soldiers have the same level of strength as a Hybrid Demon. At that point, the twenty thousand soldiers would truly be

considered a strong army.

“How’s the news from over there?” Misty Cloud asked as he walked over.

Ye Lai shook his head, “As before, they’re all hiding behind the border. Should we charge after them?”

I smiled, “Nah, we’ll wait for them here. We should nurture our strength while tiring out the army. Just have everyone remain cautious and keep their attention focused on the south. If the Japanese come, then they’ll most likely appear from that forest.”

“Got it!”

Each of the guildmasters sent out orders to their respective guilds. And so [Zhan Long], [Judgement], [Prague], [Enemies at the Gate], and [Blood Contract] all constructed their defense lines. The front lines were made up of a large number of knights, all carrying heavy shields, while the further rows were made up of archers, musketeers, mages and other classes. All of the assassins spread out in the forest, preparing their ambush. Qing Qian, Wolf, and Wei Liang all had the [Unrivaled Spirit] skill, so they had nothing to fear, and were able to fight on the frontlines. Now that they had experienced one battle with the skill, they were much more familiar with the skills techniques and were almost on par with the knights.

.....

The thick scent of blood still lingered in the air. Quite a few of us were standing on the corpses of our enemies. No one knew when they would revive, so we had to remain alert. Thankfully, we had retreated north a couple hundred meters, so most of the bodies were in front of us. Even if they came to life, we wouldn’t have to worry. Besides, we had the armies of five great guilds behind us, making our manpower fifteen thousand elite soldiers. Of them, there were the Frost Battle Ram Cavalry, the Steel Blade Horsemen, the Dragon Knights, and the Dragon Sword Cavalry making up thirty thousand of the troops. These high level knights were like a holy shield, enough to hold the enemy back for a long time.

“Sha sha...”

Qing Qian soundlessly arrived before my horse and leaned against it. Her sharp ears twitched as she looked to the distance, "It looks like they've already arrived..."

Ye Lai nodded, "Agreed, they aren't very far from us!"

I looked at the map. I could feel a strange pressure on my heart as I saw the enormous mob of red dots on the border. Those red dots were all players from the Japanese Server. Soon, they were only eight hundred yards away from us. The countless Japanese players charged through the forest and the sound of hooves thundered on the plains. Our enemies were all between the levels of 125-135. Just in terms of level, they had already surpassed the hundred thousand second rate players who lay dead before us.

On top of that, most of the players had a familiar insignia on their shoulder!

Wan Er stood beside me and looked to the distance. She pursed her lips, as though feeling some nervousness. She still smiled and said, "The number one, two, three, fourth and fifth guilds of the Japanese Players have all appeared. All of the top players have come out of the hive..."

Yan Zhao Warrior raised his sword, his eyes dark, "I think it's better to say... the top twenty guilds of the Japanese server, except the seventeenth have all appeared. These two million people could most definitely be considered their most elite forces!"

Han Bei Song wryly smiled, "Uncle, you wouldn't be feeling fear now, right?"

Yan Zhao Warrior scoffed back, "What are you joking about? If an immature kid like you isn't scared, why would I be? I've roamed these games for many years, and seen many situations far more dangerous than this one. [Prague]'s seventeen year long reputation and prestige is not just hot air."

I nodded, "Of course we know that. Let's prepare for battle now. They'll try and make the first attack, perhaps they'll even try to surround us!"

Yan Zhao's eyes lit up, "Sun Tzu once said, ten times the enemy's size, surround. Five times the enemy's size, attack. This is a principle that even the Japanese must understand. Of them, there must be quite a few who have read the Art of War. There's no need for us to worry, they will definitely try and use their advantage in numbers to try and surround us."

Qing Qian was stunned and looked over at me, "Brother Xiao Yao, then what should we do?"

I smiled, "The sentence after that, is 'If the enemy is twice as great, divide and conquer. If the enemy is on par, fight. If you are outnumbered, escape. If you are weaker, avoid.' Based on our current numbers, we're under two million. Logically speaking, we should leave some people behind to take the rear while we retreat into the Victory Passage towards Fan Shu City. But there's no need. Five million of Tian Ling City's armies will arrive within two hours. During that time, we'll use our hundred and fifty thousand men to keep them here. This time, the Japanese must pay for trying to kill our people!"

Yan Zhao Warrior gave me a stunned look. His gaze carried a tint of awe as he said, "I never would have imagined that Xiao Yao had also studied military strategy. Haha, that is truly a rare trait among youngsters."

I replied, "Those are only theories written on paper. Fighting in games requires the skill and equipment of our brothers in arms~"

Yan Zhao smiled, "If we sacrifice ourselves to become a wedge that will stop the advance of these two million people and drag out this fight, then in two hours, when [Legend], [Hero's Mound] and [Vanguard] arrive, they'll basically get to reap all of the benefits. Xiao Yao, this means that our sacrifice will be for Fang Ge Que, Q-Sword and Jian Feng Han. Are you really willing to do that?"

I looked over at the wilderness in the south, and the horizon beyond it. There must be some kind of city over there that belongs to either Flame Cloud City or Port City. I then thought of the words that Lin Tian Nan had said to me. As a young man, living in this chaotic world, why not lead a life of achievement and unify the world? Once I thought of that, I smiled and

said, "My goal is for the prosperity of our country, and not the reputation of victory in a single battle."

Yan Zhao took a deep breath and said, "Looks like choosing to ally myself with [Zhan Long] was the right decision. Mu Rong Jun's words ring true, Li Xiao Yao is a godly general, one who will not bow before another man. Speaking of which, if Jian Feng Han hadn't taken your Tian Ze Sword in the first place, would you have joined [Vanguard] and fought for Jian Feng Han and Mu Rong Jun?"

I was caught off guard by the question. I thought about it for a moment and smiled, "In the beginning, you, [Wrath of Heroes] and the [General Family] were all after me. Only Qing Qian and Wei Liang were willing to help. If I were truly at the end of the road, maybe I would join them? Who knows..."

Yan Zhao asked, "Only maybe?"

I nodded, "Yes."

As I said that, I looked over at the girl in front of my battle horse. Qing Qian was smiling at me and said, "From the first time we met, I knew that Brother Xiao Yao was a good man, a reliable one. That's why I've always treated you like a brother. Afterwards, when you fought so fiercely with Uncle for me, that's when I made the final decision to join [Zhan Long]... Cang Tong, please don't be jealous. I really only think of Brother Xiao Yao as a brother, I've never thought otherwise..."

Wan Er smiled knowingly, "Melon, don't think of me as so petty... Look at Dong Cheng, she's always joking about stealing my boyfriend. And yet, we're still inseparable. I understand."

Yan Zhao stroked his horse's mane and said, "If I was twenty years younger, who knows if there was a pretty girl who would be willing to fight so hard for me. Sigh, now that I'm old, I can't help but accept my age...."

Li Mu patted his shoulder and said, "Alright already, don't grumble so much. Even though you're old now, you've still got a very manly look. I believe that there are quite a few beautiful young wives looking to jump in your arms. Besides, you're rich, what are you envious of? Oh that's right,

Yan Zhao Warrior, do you have any lovers outside of the game?"

Yan Zhao's face practically turned green, "Can we not talk about this, I'm begging you guys!"

Li Mu laughed, "Understood!"

Right then, the beautiful vice guildmaster of [Prague], Six Ya walked over and said, "Stop teasing our honest guildmaster, if you have the energy, go and organize your formations. They're almost here. Look, even those bastards who tried to steal the Zhen Yue Blade have appeared..."

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Just as she had said, right at the front of the Japanese server's armies was the guildmaster of the number one guild, a level 136 Swordsman—Frost Forest. He steered his dragon in the sky and coldly looked down at us. He then shouted, "You Chinese, did you think that you were something impressive after killing some second rate guilds? The real war has yet to begin. Just you wait and see the real might of Port City!"

Six Ya raised her sword and walked forward with a smile, "Jap..."

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Instantly, Frost Forest's face turned green. He raised his sword and shouted, "Warriors of Port City, Charge! Kill our enemies!"

Chapter 775: Witch Moon

“Get ready, they’re coming!”

I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and rushed forward on my Flying Scythe Horse. I glanced back at everyone. I could tell that the [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen were getting nervous. After all, the army before us was many times greater than us in numbers. Whether it was in terms of common sense or in military strategy, we should be leaving. But we couldn’t. If we did, it’d be the equivalent of admitting defeat in our own territory. Tian Ling City could not afford to suffer such a great humiliation.

“Ha...”

Li Mu smiled and said, “They’re finally here!”

I looked into the distance at the massive army and asked, “How much time is left on the cooldown for the Purple Flame Dragon Chain?”

“Ten minutes!” Li Mu answered.

I smiled. “I still have three minutes left on my [Defeat the Dragon] skill. Later on, whoever I grab, you curse them to death. Li Mu, Matcha, Wan Er, you three come with me. I’ll go after the top ten players in the JBN Rankings. Li Mu, you target, Matcha attracts the firepower, and Wan Er, you help me in killing!”

Wan Er nodded, “Understood. Do not spread out too much, we’ll meet up right after the first impact!”

“Ok!”

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The sounds of fighting filled the air. The Port City players came at us like a raging flood. The impact of two million people charging at us was terrifying. Furthermore, the frontlines were made up of the most elite soldiers in Port City, and they were almost on par with our own. Of course, their equipment was far weaker than our Black Flame and Deer Cry sets.

“Kill!”

In the sky, Frost Forest pressed his dragon forward until he was right before the [Judgement] formation. Energy gathered around his blade, and with the support of his troops, he immediately killed three of the Frost Battle Ram Knights. A small hole appeared in the defense lines. Furthermore, all of the players that Frost Forest was leading were mounted on dark battle horses. It was the Dark Knights, riding on mounts that were Level 110 Saint Tier. They were only slightly lower than our Steel Blade Mounts in terms of level, but they beat us in numbers with over 120,000 of them!

It looked like Frost Forest was set on fighting us to the death. Over ten thousand of the Dark Knights spread out on the plains and charged at us!

Advance!”

I rushed forward and cut straight into the crowd of horsemen. While they were strong, they still couldn’t defend against my blade. In the blink of an eye, I cut down a dozen of the Dark Horsemen with my Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword. Li Mu, Wan Er, and Matcha followed closely behind me.

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“可恶，你们找死！”

“D*mm*t, just die already!”

Among the crowd of Japanese players, one of the squad leaders from [Casualty] raised his battle axe and swung it at me. He was a Level 134 Berserker, with the ID ‘Goto Aono,’ and he was ranked seventh in the JBN Rankings. He looked like he was pretty strong!

“Hong!”

The battle axe was wrapped in flames and twirled through the air, striking one of the Steel Blade Horsemen off of his mount. A savage smile spread across the Berserker's face as he rushed forward, leading his army of horsemen. Their impact force was incredibly fierce, pushing back One Second Hero and Yue Yao Yan’s squads.

“There!”

I dashed forward, approaching Goto Aono. He looked over at me and immediately instructed a team of a dozen horsemen to go after me. They all activated [Brave Ram] as they tried to obstruct my path. Unfortunately for them, I was not one to get stunned by an attack like this. “Peng Peng Peng.” I withstood their attacks and darted towards Goto Aono. His attack power was truly fearsome; he could not be allowed to continue living!

“Die!”

Goto Aono roared and swung his battle axe. The blade was wrapped in flames, it was the [Flame Axe] skill!

I didn’t even bother to dodge, and instead raised my Zhen Yue Blade to parry the attack. “Keng!” Sparks flew and I lost four thousand health in that one strike. Using that same movement, I swung my Dragon Reservoir Sword at him, dealing 18000+ damage. Shock overcame his face as he retreated, “You... you’re?! You’re that b*st*rd Xiao Yao Zi Zai...”

“Can’t you read my ID?”

I smiled and swept out my Zhen Yue Blade, forcing him to retreat several steps. Despite my threat, he didn’t seem to fear death at all. Relying on his advantage in numbers, he swung his battle axe at me again, cutting away another 7000+ health. He then gripped his battle axe and forcefully pushed himself upward, leaping from his mount as he threw a [Burn the Enemy’s Boats]!

I carefully observed his movements and surged forward. I easily blocked his battle axe with my Zhen Yue Blade. Then, with a light tap of my Dragon Reservoir Sword, I crossed both of my blades and “Peng!” made a successful “Skill Break” pop up in the air. Goto Aono was immediately put into a stunned status. Before I could deal another blow, he shouted, “Shield me!”

我哪儿会给他逃走的机会，一张手，擒龙特技发动！

How could I give him any chance to escape? I immediately opened my palm and activated [Defeat the Dragon]!

“Shua!”

While Goto Aono had tried to escape, he was immediately grabbed to my side. His face turned green once he realized his fate. Li Mu appeared at our side. He immediately thrust his palm out, dealing the curse. Wan Er quickly followed the attack with her [Blade of the Death God]. Goto Aono's reaction speed was truly quick. “Keng!” His battle axe blocked the first attack. He then swung his axe once again towards Wan Er's hip. Never would he have thought that Wan Er had already learned the [Concealed Spirit] skill. In the blink of an eye, she disappeared, and the attack fell into thin air. The next second, the beautiful little miss gently landed on the hilt of his battle axe, her slender snow white legs right before his face. By the time he looked up, Wan Er had already thrown a kick!

“Peng!”

Goto Aono's face was smashed in, and his two front teeth flew out. Li Mu and I surrounded him from both sides with a barrage of attacks. Like that, the Berserker ranked seventh in the JBN rankings was killed!

After we killed Goto Aono, I immediately retreated. One of the enemy's flag bearers called out, “Are there any healers around? Hurry up and revive Goto Aono!”

However, once one of the healer girls slid off the horse and opened her hand to cast a revive, her mouth formed a small O in shock, “Mr. Flag Bearer, we can't.... We can't revive him. The system gave a notice that for the next 179 minutes, we cannot revive Goto Aono. What's going on?”

The flag bearer glared over at us and cursed, “Motherf*cker, it's one of their special skills. Kill them! Avenge Goto Aono!”

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I quickly cut through the crowd of people. “Keng!” I parried the flag bearer's blade and smiled. “This is our territory, we are the ones who make the decisions here!”

Shock and frustration flashed across the flag bearer's face. Before he

could react, he took a whole round of [Combo] attacks from my blade. After [Strength of a Thousand Men] was unleashed, he immediately fell and could not revive for the next sixty minutes!

Seizing this opportunity, I charged out of the formation. Solely based on my high defense and ability to not be stunned, I did not take any of the Dark Knights seriously. I lead Matcha, Wan Er, and Li Mu through the battlefield. I kept my health up through fighting, with my 20% [Drain], my health never fell below 50%. Even if I was attracting fire from [Flying Sword]s and [Battle Axe Throw]s, they were not an issue.

In the distance, I could see Wang Jian, Old K, Bai Qi and Dong Cheng Lei all busy fighting the enemies before them. They were also attracting quite a bit of fire, decreasing the amount of impact that their fellow Steel Blade horsemen were taking. Those kids all had incredible weapons, not to mention the Deer Cry Set. In terms of stats, they had the clear advantage. Afterwards, Darling Duck and the others would immediately heal them so they could continuously fight without fear of death.

Slowly, [Zhan Long] was gaining the upper hand in the battle against [Casualty]. It was to the point where Meng Yao was able to lead a squad of knights in a charge to counterattack the enemy!

The other guilds weren't faring as well, however. [Prague] and [Judgement] were still locked in a fierce battle. Especially [Judgement], which was fighting head on against the cavalry that was personally lead by Frost Forest Rams. In those ten minutes alone, over a thousand of the Frost Ram Knights had died in battle. Meanwhile, the enemy seemed to be coming at them in endless waves. This unending stream of reinforcements was whittling away at our energy and morale.

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"Will you guys be able to hold your position?" I messaged Ye Lai.

He quickly replied as he swung his battle axe, "At the very least, we can hold our position. Don't worry. It's just two hours. We can do it! 4"

He had been in such a hurry to type that he had even made a typo. It looked like the situation was dire on their front.

As Li Mu was fighting, he looked over at me and said, “Looks like their situation isn’t great. We’re losing too many people too quickly. Especially over at [Judgement] and [Prague]’s front!”

I nodded, “Let’s reorganize the Steel Blade Horsemen’s formation. Once we do that, we’ll advance forward. Right now, the only way we can utilize our greatest advantage is by charging our cavalry. If we just use them for defense, it’ll be too much of a waste!”

“Understood!”

A few minutes later, a branch of seven thousand Steel Blade Horsemen appeared on the frontlines of [Zhan Long]. Under my command, they charged out all out once with incredible speed and force. The Japanese players immediately took the hit. Soon after, when we reached full speed, we were like a blade, slicing through the chaos between the two sides. The Japanese must’ve never thought that we would switch to the offensive with such a disadvantage in numbers. They must’ve been thinking that we’d gone crazy. But once the Steel Blade Horsemen revealed their power, that thought was immediately banished!

“Kill!”

Leading the cavalry at the very front, I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and activated my special skill—[Zhen Yue Battlesong]!

“Hua La!”

A deep blue energy wave exploded in the air, sending out waves that spread out over the entire formation. Every Chinese player within a thousand yard radius of me had their base attack power increase by four thousand points. I had carefully chosen a clustered area with as many Chinese players as possible. The effect was immediate, and a completely new killing frenzy began.

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These precious ten minutes were also our greatest opportunity. Not just [Zhan Long], but all of the other guilds were beginning to launch their counterattack. I could even see the cavalry that fought the Frost Forest

Rams were trying to defend against the surge. Despite that, we couldn't be held back. Ye Lai lead a group of Frost Ram Knights who were in critical health in a counter attack, killing a whole group of Dark Knights!

In ten short minutes, we had managed to kill over fifty thousand of the enemy's troops!

Increasing base attack by four thousand points was already a fairly crazy stat. It was basically an incomparable stat, and so naturally nobody could defeat us. Those ten minutes were the Port City Knights most devastating nightmare!

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However, ten minutes quickly passed by, and the stat disappeared. Our disadvantage in numbers was once again sticking out. Even worse was the fact that a group of people had appeared on our left flank, the weakest point in [Zhan Long]'s formation. I could see three thousand Japanese troops in the distance. All of their mounts were the same silver color. There was a beautiful female knight leading them in the front. It was Witch Moon; The guildmaster of [New Moon] had appeared. She was ranked second strongest in the JBN Rankings, and she was leading three thousand of her Beautiful Moon Knights against us!

This was the prelude to a pincer attack. It was just as Frost Forest had said, the true battle had just begun!

Chapter 776: [New Moon]'S Strategy

“It’s the Beautiful Moon Knights!”

Wang Jian clenched his teeth, “Level 114 Saint Tier Mounts. The [New Moon] guildmaster Witch Moon is the daughter of the Japanese Branch Manager. I heard that they were able to create the Beautiful Moon Knights using an enormous amount of resources. They’re one of the top cavalries in Port City. Our strongest enemy has finally arrived!”

I quickly turned my horse around towards the Beautiful Moon Knights. Based on our initial estimate, there were over three thousand knights. Witch Moon was the flirtatious girl standing at the very front. I could see mischief and competition in her eyes. She gripped a long sword in one hand, and her reigns in the other. She was coming for [Zhan Long]. Thinking about it, she probably already felt hatred for us after we had killed 15,000 of [New Moon]’s players.

“Steel Blade Horsemen!”

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and shouted, “All Steel Blade Horsemen, follow me. We’re going to go and meet the elite horsemen of [New Moon]! Let’s see what all the fuss is about. Li Mu, take the Valiant Bravery camp and lead them against [Casualty]!”

Li Mu nodded without any hesitation and said, “Go ahead, be careful!”

“Will do!”

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I urged my Flying Scythe Horse forward. I then opened my palm and helped Wan Er onto the horse as I passed by her. She hugged me tightly from behind and said, “Do not underestimate the enemy. The Beautiful Moon Knights all have mounts that are on the same tier as our Steel Blade Horses. Plus, their equipment doesn’t look to be any less special than ours. We have to fight with everything we have!”

“Ok!”

Among the Steel Blade Horsemen, [Zhan Long] had only lost around

three thousand players in the midst of battle. In terms of numbers, we did not have the advantage. Wang Jian and the others helped Dancing Forest, Dong Cheng, Thousand Suns, and Xing Lie and the other ranged players onto their horses. If we had both impact force and ranged support, then at least half of our mission was complete.

My Flying Scythe Horse accelerated forward. I quickly changed direction, pointing my sword directly at Witch Moon. Just how capable was this Level 137 beautiful knight, having built up a guild as large as [New Moon]!

“Prepare for battle!”

As I shouted the orders, Wan Er gracefully slid off my horse to find her target. I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash], right at Witch Moon!

“Huh?!”

Witch Moon stiffened slightly, her mouth forming a small “o.” Despite the surprise, she didn’t panic at all, and lightly tapped on her horse, making it charge forward. This swift move had allowed her to dodge my [Seven Star Fragment Slash]. Quickly following the move, I threw my Zhen Yue Blade out, letting it spin through the air. The first twirl pierced right through Witch Moon’s chest!

“Hmph!”

Witch Moon raised her blade in front of her chest and parried my sword. She and her horse were forced backwards by the impact, and in the midst of it, she even received some damage. I could see surprise flash in her eyes. She probably never would’ve thought that there would be an attack so fierce!

I opened my hand and threw a [Defeat the Dragon] out!

My intentions were too obvious however. I was there to defeat the king and Witch Moon knew that. In another quick turn on her horse, she dodged my special skill. My heart fell slightly. This Witch Moon’s maneuvers were truly on par with the top ten in the CBN Rankings. Killing her would not be an easy task. I had indeed underestimated her.

In the blink of an eye, we were right before each other. I sheathed my Dragon Reservoir Sword and held my Zhen Yue Blade in both hands. Witch Moon didn't give in the slightest bit and threw a [Skyshaker Stab] at me.

“Keng!”

Sparks flew out and flames roared around us. I stiffened as I felt my sword vibrate from the impact. Witch Moon let out a surprised yelp as my blow nearly knocked her off of her horse. She then ducked against her horse and charged forward, avoiding a slash from Old K. She was incredibly skillful and nimble!

During a charge, it was near impossible to turn around and chase after an enemy. Thus, I continued leading the cavalry in our advance. I swung my blade, cutting down the Beautiful Moon Knights one by one. Despite that, it was clear that the Beautiful Moon Knights were nearly on par with us. [Combo]s and skills were continuously thrown out on the battlefield. Each time a Beautiful Moon Knight threw a slash, a flash of moonlight would shine. Not to mention the fact this battle was fought underneath the moonlight. Is it possible that they were drawing strength from light of the moon?

The second this realization dawned upon me, I immediately knew that our intel was not as comprehensive as we had initially thought. Just in this initial impact, we had already lost over a hundred Steel Blade Horsemen. We had never once met a situation like this before. While the Beautiful Moon Knights had a lower defense than us, under the moonlight their attack power had far surpassed the Zhan Long camp!

But, the arrow was already notched on the string and there was no turning back. All we could do now was continue fighting. The more we killed, the less enemies we would face!

With a jerk of my blade, I activated the [Halberd Flame] special skill and charged straight into the most dense part of the crowd. Afterwards, I raised my blade and shot forward like a whirlwind, activating [Sword Tempest]. All of the Beautiful Moon Knights were immediately plunged

into critical health. I looked back and shouted, "Qing Qian, kill them all!"

Qing Qian had just activated [Unrivaled Spirit] and was fighting with several Beautiful Moon knights. She stepped forward and whirled into the air, throwing a [Grip of the Firefox] as she raised her hand. At that moment, twenty other Beautiful Moon Knights knelt to the ground in a pool of blood, as there were fiery claw marks left on their backs.

Old K quickly rushed forward, leaving a [Whirlwind Slash] in his wake and killing a Beautiful Moon knight who only had half of their health left. Dong Cheng Lei raised his battle axe and charged straight into the crowd of people. I could see a pretty mage standing at his side. It was Dong Cheng Yue. She gripped her Deer Cry Staff and cast spell after spell into the crowd of people. Dong Cheng Lei raised his battle axe and stood guard for his sister. Nobody could stand against this sister brother duo.

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"Ka Cha!"

I swept my Zhen Yue Blade through the hip of a knight, bringing out 23,000 damage. The knight's eyes widened, as though he could never imagine that another man's attack would deal that much damage. But once he saw the golden letters above my head that declared my position in the top ten rankings of the CBN Battlenet, a flash of understanding appeared in his eyes right as he died.

"Continue forward!"

I strode forward, leading the cavalry in the charge. After we smashed into the Beautiful Moon Knights formation, [Zhan Long] didn't manage to get much of an advantage. The Beautiful Moon Knights' attack power was just too high. Each slash they dealt gave at least ten thousand damage. They were all critical attacks. Even the Steel Blade Horsemen couldn't completely defend against them. There was no way we could take this kind of damage.

Furthermore, as we continued charging, we looked around only to see that behind the Beautiful Moon Knights was an army of horsemen. After killing several dozen players, I started to feel a chill run through my heart.

All twenty thousand of their cavalry had revived and were now right before [Zhan Long]'s formation. If we continued this charge, there may be no return. All I had seen were the Beautiful Moon Knights, and none of the others. That was my greatest miscalculation.

I clenched my teeth and firmly commanded, "The front row is now the rear, and the rear is the front. We are charging back and meeting up with the other brothers of [Zhan Long]. Prepare the frontlines!"

Everyone shouted their agreement and began to make the turn. Matcha, Yao Yan and Meng Yao were the first to charge out of the crowd. Some of the [New Moon] players looked like they couldn't bear to attack them. It wasn't until the girls unleashed their barrage of attacks did they awaken from their illusion. They all clamored, saying they should keep the girls in Port City.

I rushed forward, and soon reached the frontlines and continued my violent rage. My Ancient Heavenly Tiger roared and pounced into the crowd while Wan Er's Purple Kirin Dragon flew above our head and spat flames at the enemy troops. The dragon's armor of scales was thick, even after several [Battle Axe Throw]s, it had only lost 40% of its health. Killing it would not be an easy task.

Along the way, the path was covered with the corpses of Steel Blade Horsemen and Beautiful Moon Knights alike. This was a battle of honor. The Chinese server and the Japanese server were using their full might. Frost Forest and Witch Moon most likely understood the fact that their time was short. They must deal as much damage to us as possible in as quick amount of time as they could, otherwise when the main forces from the Chinese server arrived, they would suffer even greater losses.

But, the gods are always playing tricks on man. No matter how hard Frost Forest and Witch Moon try, our five guilds would be able to hold them back for two hours without a problem. We would do whatever it took!

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When we arrived back at the [Zhan Long] formation, all of the Steel

Blade horsemen returned to their positions. I did a quick survey of our numbers. This time we had lost over fourteen hundred of our knights, over half of the entire cavalry. Thankfully we still had our core players. Old K, Matcha, Qing Qian, and Wan Er were all on the frontlines, there was no need to be afraid of Witch Moon's attack.

As I had expected, the Beautiful Moon Knights quickly caught up with us. Witch Moon raised her blade and seemed to be giving orders. However, I was too far to hear just what they were. Several clerics suddenly appeared and began reviving the Beautiful Moon Knights one by one. Step by step, they pushed closer to us.

Wolf shuddered, "What an intelligent woman. Witch Moon is not a simple person. With that one move, she managed to prevent the fourteen hundred [Zhan Long] players outside of our formation from reviving. This is a huge loss for us!"

I gave a nod, "Tell everyone to hold off on reviving. Otherwise, they'd only lose another level for nothing. They just need to patiently lie in wait for the perfect opportunity to resurrect."

"Yes sir!"

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Right then, Battle Thunder appeared among the crowd of New Moon players. With a savage smile, he said, "[Zhan Long], the number one guild in the Chinese Server. Looks like they're just all talk. Just you wait, the real pain is now!"

Witch Moon strode towards our formation and smiled, "Battle Thunder, have you not suffered enough punishment? You're actually going to underestimate your enemy at a time like this? Besides, [Zhan Long] isn't the number one guild in the Chinese Server. [Legend] is. Even [Hero's Mound] is stronger than [Zhan Long]. Do not look down upon your enemy, but do not fear them. Do you understand?"

Battle Thunder was a man among men, but he respectfully gave this girly guildmaster a nod, "Little miss, I understand..."

Witch Moon looked over at us with a playful smile on her lips, “Have our divisions attack first. The Beautiful Moon Knights need twenty minutes to rest and reorganize. At that moment, we’ll deal the finishing blow!”

“Yes milady!”

“Yes milady!”

Chapter 777: Cornered

“Ha!”

Old K spat on the ground and said, “Those shameless b*st*rds. They’re clearly using their division troops to whittle away at our energy and then crush us in a final blow. They’re cowards! Do those Port City players have even a shred of honor? Are they willing to go to any lengths for the sake of victory? Do they not care about the lives of their brothers and sisters?”

One Second Hero laughed. “It’s understandable. Port City has less than half of Tian Ling City’s population. Not to mention the fact that they have less than a third of our territories for grinding levels. They’re already extremely pressed in resources. Victory, for them, is even more important than honor. Not to mention the fact that it’s a very logical strategy. That is their advantage over us.”

I gripped my Dragon Reservoir Sword and said, “No more gossiping, all of you. Prepare for battle. If they’re sending out their divisions, then they’ll only be giving us their heads. We won’t give in even half a step. Otherwise, [Prague], [Judgement], [Enemies at the Gate], and [Blood Contract] will all feel the impact! Seeing as Witch Moon is trying to test our perseverance, then why don’t we show those [New Moon] players just how long [Zhan Long] can hold out!”

Fox raised his musketeer and laughed, “That’s right! Our [Zhan Long] men exceed in endurance!”

Dancing Forest couldn’t help but smile, “Can the [Zhan Long] women also endure for a long time?”

Fox smiled mischievously, “I understand, after all, that’s the number one trait for a Queen...”

“What are Queen traits?” Dancing Forest was puzzled.

Fox continued, “The three traits of a queen, Courage, Attitude, and Innocence.....”

Dancing Forest’s face turned green, “What the f*ck, I’m not talking to

you anymore.”

Everyone broke out in laughter. It seems like nobody was particularly worried about the thousands of enemies that awaited us. As long as we were all together, there’s no enemy too great, nor mountain too tall.

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“Kill! Kill!”

We could hear the jeers from the [New Moon] soldiers. As predicted, they had gathered together a dozen or so divisions who were prepared to attack us. Their presence was practically overbearing. There were at least fifteen thousand troops. Just in terms of numbers, that was enough to alter the course of battle. However, their battle power was far weaker than that of the Beautiful Moon Knights. I was confident that our Steel Blade Horsemen could easily handle them.

“Prepare!”

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and shouted, “Do not charge, hold your positions. Ranged players, attack!”

Hooves stomped in unison. Close to ten thousand [New Moon] horsemen were charging at us at once. [Zhan Long]’s horsemen were setting up their shield formations. They raised their blades and prepared for the impact. Dancing Forest, Dong Cheng, Xie Lie, Fox, Thousand Suns, and General Lian Po brought their ranged player teams forward and launched their attack. That way, they could bring the enemies into range more quickly.

“Prepare [Scatter Shot]s!”

Dancing Forest raised her bow and shouted, “Release!”

Close to seven thousand people from the [Zhan Long] camp let out a rain of arrows en masse. I could hear the [Scatter Shot]s slamming against the armor of the [New Moon] players. Large groups of people would be instantly stunned. Dong Cheng then commanded the mages to activate their [Lullaby], [Magma Lance], [Lightning Eagle Formation] and other spells to deal large amounts of damage. There were around three

thousand who managed to break out of the firenet, only to charge straight into a dense thicket of [Magma Lance] and [Lightning Eagle] spells. Our musketeers also let loose quite a few [Magma Bullet]s, exploding their targets. The splash damage was shocking.

In the end, when a group of New Moon Knights finally arrived before our shield formation, they were all left in critical health. The Steel Blade Horsemen quickly switched to the offensive and rammed their shields into the enemy. “Peng peng peng!” I could hear the shields ramming into each other. Closely following that was the sound of metal cutting through flesh. It was as though the [New Moon] players had gone crazy, charging straight into the line of fire. Even as their comrades fell all around them, they continued forward, stepping upon their corpses and ripping into the [Zhan Long] frontlines. Three to five of them would overwhelm a single Steel Blade Horsemen until they could bring him down. They were incredibly determined.

“Motherf*cker!”

Old K roared and threw a [Whirlwind Slash] into the crowd of people. He then used a [Savage Jump Slash], cutting down all the players left with critical health. After a few slashes and cuts, he leapt back onto his horse and continued guarding the lines. Now that he become an experienced veteran, even a D level technique like Old K’s would eventually rise up to A. It is truly worthy of praise.

I led my horse and roamed the frontlines, killing enemies left and right. Once the cooldown for my [Flame Halberd] had finished, I immediately activated it in the most clustered areas. Either way, I could easily get rage points. Each time someone hit me, my rage rose, filling up in minutes. Thus, in the eyes of a Drunken Sword Style player like me, this kind of chaotic battle was the perfect environment. Any one of my special skills was enough to make my enemies beg for mercy. Otherwise, gathering together Battle Reflux Style equipment sets such that you can hold your ground in a battle was the true path of a king. Otherwise, no matter how high your attack was, you still wouldn’t be able to defend against a barrage of arrows and spells.

.....

Bodies piled up in pools of blood. They were practically growing to the height of a man. Once mounts died, they disappeared, meaning all of the bodies before us had been players. When close to ten thousand of their horsemen had died, [New Moon]'s archers, mages, musketeers and other ranged players were finally within our reach. A group of monks carrying shields tried to hold off the Steel Blade Horsemen, as they relied on their damagers to whittle away at our numbers.

Thankfully we had our own healers at the rear of our formation. Rays of [Heal]s flashed in the air. Killing a Steel Blade Horsemen was not an easy task. After a few minutes, [New Moon] changed their battle strategy and began to focus their firepower on each knight. There would always be at least ten ranged players focusing on one Steel Blade Horsemen. Very soon, they couldn't take it any longer and finally fell to the ground. Once a horseman fell, the knights would use [Blade Rush] and tear into our frontlines, and then with [Sword Break]+[Flying Sword] they would cut through our lines, messing up our rhythm!

"Hold your positions!"

I raised my bloody Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword as I charged into the crowd of enemies and said, "Healers, revive the dead Steel Blade Horsemen. We have to hold our position. There's still forty minutes left. All we need is to hold on for another forty minutes!"

As I said that, I felt doubt creep into my heart as I looked into the distance. [Judgement] and [Prague] weren't much better off. Besides [Casualty], they were also up against the top dozen or so guilds in the Japanese Server. I could just imagine the amount of pressure on them.

"D*mm*t!"

One Second Hero pulled out an arrow from his face and grimaced, "We clearly had a much easier time killing the [New Moon] players at Pan Long Peak. What's going on, why are these f*ckers so hard to kill now!?"

I looked into the distance and said, "Because of Witch Moon..."

“That’s just one woman, can she really have that much influence?” One Second Hero smiled, the scar on his face also rising up, “I can make her call me Honey just by taking off my pants, hmph!”

I smiled back, “Hmph, if you take your pants off now and run over to Witch Moon and get her to call you honey, I’ll immediately let you into the Zhan Long Hall!”

One Second Hero rubbed his nose, “What, I was just joking. Don’t take it so seriously. Guildmaster, your one problem is that you take things too seriously. You need to loosen up, otherwise you’d have even more female fans....”

Dancing Forest waved her hand and said, “Xiao Yao already has enough beautiful girls who like him. Any more and the heavens will unleash its fury upon him...”

Li Mu was around three hundred meters away and laughed, “That’s right, Little Dance is completely right. Xiao Yao has way too many fans!”

Wolf shouted back, “Li Mu, how the f*ck did you hear that? Are you actually properly leading the Valiant Bravery Camp!?”

.....

We continued holding off the enemy for another twenty minutes. There were over seventeen thousand corpses lying before the [New Moon] army. Practically all of the players in the division had died. [Zhan Long] had lost quite a bit as well. So many of our Steel Blade Horsemen had died that our formation was loose. Thankfully, Meng Yao quickly lead a group of a hundred Horsemen forward in a charge. Otherwise, the consequences would be dire.

“He he...”

Old K raised his bloody battle axe and huffed. He looked like he had just dragged himself out of a puddle of blood. I was no better. My white battle robe was completely dyed red. Furthermore, it was ragged and covered in bullet and arrow holes alike. Motherf*cker, my Hidden Dragon Armor’s [Thousand Layer Cliff] had already reached a 200% increase in defense. I

wasn't afraid of death at all, however we had lost too many [Zhan Long] members. A lot of players had died twice and were still fighting. I quickly gave the command, telling all players who had died twice to stop reviving. Their mission was over. I did not want [Zhan Long] to be crippled by this battle.

“Careful!”

I looked into the distance and saw that the Beautiful Moon Knights were making their final preparations. They were BUFFing each other, getting ready to charge. I could see Witch Moon wiping her blade, glaring at the [Zhan Long] formation with deep hatred in her eyes.

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and roared, “Do not retreat. We are not cowards! The worst that can happen is we die here! Gather up your courage and focus. We are [Zhan Long] and we will dominate the world!”

Everyone cheered and whooped. Quite a few of the Steel Blade Horsemen who had died revived once again. When we gathered together two thousand of our cavalry, I felt something rise up in my throat as I looked at the crowd. For the sake of this battle of honor, [Zhan Long] had sacrificed too much!

.....

Hooves beat against the ground, making the earth tremble. Witch Moon raised her long sword and shouted, “Ranged players, charge with me. We'll overwhelm them in one charge! [Zhan Long] is at its death bed. No matter what, they are too weak for us. Kill them all!”

I clenched my teeth and raised my Zhen Yue Blade before my chest, “Steel Blade Horsemen, charge with me. We must maintain our advantage in speed. Ranged players follow behind. We're fighting to the death today!”

Wan Er nodded in agreement, “Good. All forces, advance. Otherwise we'll be stuck on the defense!”

Everyone quickly dashed forward together. Two thousand Steel Blade Horsemen accelerated together. Even as our armor cracked and our blades

dulled, nobody shirked their duty. Each had a fire in their eyes and courage in their hearts.

Chapter 778: Triumphant Return

“Kill Witch Moon?” Wolf asked in the team chat.

I nodded firmly, “Old K, you’re bait. I’ll grab her and you guys kill!”

“Yes sir!”

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Old K spurred his horse faster and raised his battle axe, dashing straight for Witch Moon. With his attack power, he had no reason to fear Witch Moon, but in terms of overall battle power, Witch Moon’s strength was a level higher than his.

“Oh?”

Witch Moon smiled mischievously. With a sweep of her blade, she easily parried Old K’s [Savage Jump Slash]. Closely following it, she threw a pierce. “Pu Chi!” It punctured Old K’s chest armor. She then rammed him with her shield and “Peng!” hit him in the face. His expression a mixture of embarrassment and surprise, Old K quickly retreated. Witch Moon then commanded, “Kill him!”

Knights and swordsmen surrounded him from all sides, their blades glowing with skills and combos. If all of their attacks hit, Old K would be a goner. Witch Moon dashed forward with her own sword as well. At that moment, Old K activated his [Oppose the Heavens]. His health no longer dropped. Furthermore, he sliced his battle axe right into Witch Moon’s shoulder. Then, using his battle axe as a hook, he latched himself onto Guildmaster Witch Moon and smiled, “Little girl, let’s see just where you plan on running!”

“You f*cker!”

Witch Moon was stunned by his move. She suddenly leaned over on her horse, dragging herself out of the blade’s entrapment. She then threw another slash at Old K and turned around to run. By then, she was captured by my [Dragon’s Hook]. “Shua!” Witch Moon was dragged right to my side. Wan Er’s [Blade of the Death God] activated while she was

midflight, ramming right into Witch Moon's shield!

“13282 ! ”

“13228 ! ”

“14984 ! ”

.....

Then, with another cut from me, Witch Moon's health soon dropped to critical. I could see shock throughout her expression. She clenched her teeth and a golden light spread out from her shield. It was a special skill! She then slid out of our grasp, stepping right across the bloody grass. She then leapt up, stepping onto One Second Hero's shoulder for support and jumped into the sky, landing right on her own horse. “Charge and do not look back!”

“What the f*ck, she didn't die even after all of that?” Wolf gasped. But there was no time to go after her again, we were in the middle of a clash.

I sent out the Ancient Heavenly Tiger to pursue Witch Moon. It wouldn't rest until Witch Moon was dead, but more likely than not, the tiger would die first. There was still an advantage in controlling Witch Moon's movements. At the very least, we would decrease our losses by quite a bit. When that girl used her full might, it dealt enormous damage towards [Zhan Long].

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Dashing forward, I watched as the Steel Blade Horsemen clashed against the enemy. I slashed my way through the Beautiful Moon Cavalry, straight towards the ranged players from [New Moon]. Under the barrage of spells and arrows, our horsemen were falling. The rest continued their charge. Behind us, Dong Cheng, Dancing Forest and the others were right up against the cavalry, forcing them to attack while dodging. This battle was a complete fight to the death!

In the guild chat, I hastily typed, “Li Mu, call a thousand of the Steel Blade Horsemen to help protect the ranged players!”

Li Mu nodded, "Wang Jian, let's head out!"

Wang Jian replied, "Yes sir!"

Dust rose behind us. I lead the [Zhan Long] troops into the chaos. Layers upon layers of blood covered my battle robe. The stink of blood filled my nose. There were others who couldn't bear the odor, but they had no choice but to press on.

The climax of the battle was still ahead and would not be changed by anyone's determination. It was as though the entire plains had been dyed in blood!

Every few minutes I would receive battle reports. [Judgement], and [Prague] had already suffered losses of over 70%. But, as before, they continued the bitter fight and controlled the enemy's forces. [Enemies at the Gate] on the other hand only had around three thousand people left. [Blood Contract] had less than a thousand. Han Bei Song was leading a ragtag group of soldiers. Any way you looked at it, [Zhan Long] was in a much better condition. We had brought 27,000 people. Between the Zhan Long Camp and the Valiant Bravery Camp, we still had around 11,000 people left, putting our losses at around 60%.

Seconds and minutes passed by and in the blink of an eye, twenty minutes passed. The players from [New Moon] were fighting like crazy under Witch Moon's command, doing everything they could to put pressure on [Zhan Long]. Within twenty minutes, the Zhan Long camp had lost three thousand players. Only a strong few were left. As I lead a group of players with only half of their health remaining to charge out of the enemy forces, I could see Witch Moon leading a team in pursuit. Motherf*cker, not only did they have more people than us, but their entire situation was much better than ours!

I was afraid that this time, Witch Moon was determined to fight us all. She didn't care about losing equipment or dropping a level. There was no limit to the number of times that her guild's players revived. There were many who had died four or five times already. As this battle of attrition continued, it was no wonder that Zhan Long was falling behind. The most

critical part was the fact that another branch of elite cavalry had rushed over to reinforce the enemy troops. It was some guild called “Wen Quan Corp” that was ranked eleventh in the Japanese guild rankings. There were around five thousand elite horsemen attacking Zhan Long from another front.

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“F*ck....” Old K shuddered. A flash of despair passed through his eyes as he said, “Our entire army’s going to be decimated today!”

Wolf clenched his teeth, “There’s too many of them...”

I trembled with anger and determination, “Don’t give up, not until the very last second...”

Right then, Qing Qian pointed towards the north and said, “Look, there’s people coming in from Pan Long Peak, and they’re coming in fast!”

Everyone looked at where she was pointing. Masses of horsemen were charging forward, all wearing the same insignia on their shoulder. I could see the crimson flag beside their IDs above their heads. An enormous weight lifted from my chest. They were finally here—[Legend]!

Around ten thousand Earth Bane Oxen were charging down the slopes. These were the most elite horsemen under [Legend]’s command. Leading the charge was a beautiful general riding on a white horse; it was Enchanted Painting. She swung her sword and smiled, “Charge! [Zhan Long] those pitiful b*st*rds are about to be decimated....”

Xuan Yuan Feng was visibly surprised, “To be able to force [Zhan Long] into such a position, these Japanese players are not as simple as they seem...”

“Hurry up and attack, cut the small talk!”

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In the end, before either [New Moon] or [Wen Quan Corp] could deal the finishing blow on [Zhan Long], [Legend] came charging in. Obviously, [Legend]’s most elite knights had a battle power that matched their name.

There was no way that the dispirited players of [New Moon] could possibly hold against them. As for that 11th ranked [Wen Quan Corp], naturally they were not on par and were immediately massacred. I quickly ordered the Steel Blade Horsemen to assist in the charge, dealing a pincer attack from the front and the back. This time, we had a much better result. In a short ten minutes, [New Moon] was defeated. Even Witch Moon had died under Enchanted Painting's blade.

On the map, I could see countless green dots emerge from the distance. It wasn't until then that I truly let out a sigh of relief. The main forces of the Chinese Server had finally arrived. [Hero's Mound], [Vanguard], [Appearance Alliance], [House of Prestige] and all of the other guilds appeared. Most of them were surround the back end of the enemy's formation, flanking their soldiers. Even Not Ordinary from [Thousand Mound] had appeared. He lead 30,000 Greedy Wolf Raiders to charge an area with several second rate Japanese Guilds. In that moment, I was actually starting to think that the Greedy Wolf Mounts looked a bit cute.

[Legend], [Hero's Mound], [Vanguard] and the others must've already discussed this. Enchanted Painting would bring an army of 10,000 to provide reinforcements for us, so that our armies wouldn't be completely decimated. Afterwards, the main forces would be able to easily turn the tide of battle, killing off all chances for the two million Japanese players to react to the encirclement. I could tell that this was the work of Fang Ge Que. His debut as the Commander of the Chinese troops had truly displayed the sharpness of his wit, and the lives of hundreds of thousands of Port City players sacrificed to showcase his skills!

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As the great battle continued, I reorganized the [Zhan Long] forces before entering into the fray. Either way, this battle was a learning experience. Everyone here needed to get as much battle experience as possible before the country battles begin.

The enemy troops collapsed under the pressure from both fronts. The death of Frost Forest, Witch Moon and the other famous Japanese players already signaled the defeat of the Japanese troops. It felt as though the

Japanese pirates were once again invading the Chinese shores, except this time, we massacred them all, leaving no mercy.

The battle had lasted for a whole seven hours. Finally, after bringing out five million players, the Chinese server managed to completely decimate the two million man army that the Japanese had brought to shore. This was truly a battle worthy of being recorded into Destiny's history.

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After the long fight, I could tell that the [Zhan Long] players were extremely fatigued. The [Legend] guildmaster Fang Ge Que held a fan in his hand as he walked over. I could see quite a bit of blood dying the ends of his battle robes. It looked like he also killed quite a few of the enemy. As he looked at the exhausted faces of the [Zhan Long] soldiers, he smiled, "Let us allow [Zhan Long], [Judgement], [Prague], [Enemies at the Gate] and [Blood Contract] to be the first to sweep the battlefield. Once you are done, we will sweep up the rest!"

Discontent and disappointment rose up among the players from [Run like Fire]. Rumor shouted, "Everyone here fought hard and lost blood in this battle. What gives them the right to sweep the battlefield first?"

Fang Ge Que smiled lightly, "Because that is what I believe to be fair and just."

Not Ordinary then said, "But, isn't that too unreasonable?"

Enchanted Painting smiled coldly, "[Zhan Long], [Judgement] and the other three guilds, for the sake of holding the enemy off, were nearly decimated in battle. Did you suffer the same kind of losses? Besides, you can clearly see that in total, [Zhan Long], [Judgement], [Prague], [Enemies at the Gate], and [Blood Contract] lost 29,000 players total, but had managed to kill a million of the enemy's troops. They had killed half of the Japanese players here, and they were all the elites. All we had to do was finish what they started. I'm afraid it would be inexcusable if we tried to take their accomplishments, isn't that right?"

Mu Xuan smiled, "Save face while you can, Vice commander Rumor, please be more prudent. After all, everyone here respects you so very

much right now.”

With that, Rumor shut up. To top it all off, Fang Ge Que’s achievement was undeniable proof of his capability as a commander. Even as a vice commander, Fang Ge Que could still easily strip him of certain privileges.

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I sheathed my Zhen Yue Blade and said, “Brothers, sweep the battlefields. Pick what you like. After ten minutes, return to the city and rest. Happy New Years everyone, happy hunting!”

Everyone from [Zhan Long] grinned from ear to ear. We had finally won this hard earned victory. Losing equipment and dropping a level was all worth it for this moment.

In reality, we only swept a small portion of the battlefield. We still left most of it to [Legend], [Hero’s Mound] and the other guilds. After I returned home, I glanced at the clock. It was already eleven at night. Dong Cheng sent a message, “Brother Xiao Yao, call Wan Er and tell her that I’m almost here. I even brought some food....”

“Oh, you’re coming over this late?”

“Yup, what would happen otherwise?”

“Alright alright, if you’re coming then come. Our chef is on vacation, so we really don’t have anything to eat.”

“Ok, wait up for me!”

.....

That evening, Dong Cheng returned home and brought lots of delicious food. Once we were all full, we went for some much desired sleep.

Chapter 779: Charge of an Army

The next morning, I woke up early and ate some of the wontons that Dong Cheng had brought back, then rushed online.

A new day, a new goal.

Today's goal was simple. In terms of levels, I was already at a good place. Rumors and legends of yesterday's battle at the War God's River had spread far and wide, enough so that the Port City players were unlikely to set foot on our territory again. My task now was to properly train the Royal Army, so that they would become a powerful army at our disposal.

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“Shua!”

When I logged on, I appeared in Tian Ling City. I quickly repaired my equipment and replenished my potions before teleporting to the Dragon's Den. A couple of the upgrades I had made last time were now complete and the Dragon's Den was now the first player city in the entire server to reach Level 10. Additionally, our production capability had increased quite a bit. Chi Yu Han and Chi Yu Qing's management capability was truly superior—

[Dragon's Den] (Level 10 Player City)

City Owner: Xiao Yao Zi Zai

Guardian: Chi Yu Han & Vice: Chi Yu Qing

City Buildings: 30

Soldiers: 7355

Laborers: 18030

City Scale: Super Big

City Production Capability—

Food: 60700/hour

Wood: 60000/hour

Stones: 60000/hour

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I looked up and saw that another shocking construction had been built beside the hawk nests. It looked almost like a small mountain, but there were holes all along the sides. People with trypophobia probably wouldn't be able to take the sight. The construction itself was called "Dragon's Nest." It was a required construction for the Level 10 "Cliff Dragon Knights." Right then, it was already a Level 7 building. It looked like Wan Er and Qing Qian had been leveling it up. The higher the level of the construction, the quicker we'd be able to recruit that type of soldier. I looked at the requirements for the Cliff Dragon Knights and felt my heart do a little leap in happiness—

Level 10 Soldier: Cliff Dragon Knights, City Owner Stats x120%,
Requirements: Gold x3000, Food x2950, Wood x3200, Stones x3000

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Without hesitation, I used up all of the city's resources to recruit some. After all, a Level 10 city's storage could hold quite a bit. In one breath, I recruited 500 Cliff Dragon Knights. Around seven minutes later, I heard a screech from the top of the nest. I saw a fierce looking dragon poke its head out of one of the holes. Its eyes were like that of a lizard. It batted its eyes a few times and then sneezed a flame out of its nose. Afterwards it continued stretching outward until it was perched on the side of the nest. A mount's helmet rested on the head of the dragon and knight suited in a heavy coat of armor was sitting on its back. I could see fire in its eyes as it glanced over to me. When it saw the icon over my head, the knight jumped off of its mount and respectfully bowed to me, "City Lord!"

I nodded, "Go ahead!"

"Yes sir!"

He jumped back onto his mount with his dragon spear. The cliff dragon let out a screech and jumped into the air, flying towards the training grounds. Over there, I could see Chi Yu Han running drills with the soldiers. The Cliff Dragon Knight was a Level 10 soldier, and must serve

under the orders of Chi Yu Han, thus making it necessary for the new knight to report to him.

I urged my Steel Blade Horse into the city. After making a complete round of the city, I noticed that the number of players who had joined the city was steadily growing. The Dragon's Den was close to Dragon City and the Ice Ridge Mountains where high level monsters spawned. It was a holy place for leveling. Besides, just north of the Ice Ridge Mountains were the Hybrid Demons who would trespass into the region from time to time. Quite a few players discovered that after killing the Hybrid Demons they would receive enormous amounts of rewards. So they used Dragon's Den as a base, allowing the player city to reap the benefits. Each time a player teleported, bought potions or fixed their equipment would lead to revenue. Most of the money went into our treasury for the Zhan Long players.

After making another round, I concluded that there weren't many problems to address under the management of Chi Yu Qing and Chi Yu Han. All I needed to do was recruit more soldiers. Qing Qian and Wan Er, the two vice guild masters, were limited to recruiting laborers and leveling up the buildings. Recruiting soldiers would have to be done by me, the city owner.

After completing the inspection, I left to head to the Royal Army!

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I quickly returned to Tian Ling City and ran to the Royal Army Camp. On the way there, I opened up the Chinese server forums. As I had expected, it was filled with news of our victory from yesterday. Frost Forest, Witch Moon and the other three million Japanese players were swept out of our territory. Furthermore, [Legend], [Hero's Mound], and [Vanguard] had all camped out in the War God River territory, each guild switching out every three days. This way, the Japanese wouldn't even think about poaching on our territory.

In terms of our battle, the forums had nothing but praise. Quite a few were even worshipping Fang Ge Que like a god. There was an overall consensus was that the Chinese Battlenet's number one player was

without a doubt on par with a god. [Legend] had used their main forces to end yesterday's battle. With a single sweep, they had destroyed the Port City army. Of course, there were some who digressed, and thought that the real heroes were [Zhan Long], [Prague], [Judgement], [Enemies at the Gate] and [Blood Contract]. Those five guilds had killed over three times more than [Legend] had. They argued that no matter what, the man with the most achievements was not Fang Ge Que in this last battle.

And so, the forum was immersed into an enormous war between the people who thought that the five guilds, [Zhan Long], [Prague], [Judgement], and the others were the true heroes, and the [Legend] supporters. There was no other way, after all this was reality. Just because we bled, did not necessarily mean that our loss was acknowledged. But that was no problem. There was still time for [Zhan Long] to prove itself. Besides, in terms of war, the Battle of the War God River was just the beginning.

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“Lord General!”

When I arrived at the Royal Army, the sentries went down to one knee and saluted me. I gave a short nod in acknowledgement and dashed straight into the camp. The sounds of training and fighting filled the air from both sides, as a large number of soldiers were in the midst of simulating a battle.

“General, you’ve finally come!”

Han Yuan lead his horse to me and smiled, “General’s methods are truly effective. Look, those soft footed Royal Army Soldiers have improved so much!”

I looked into the distance and saw a group of human soldiers practicing [Blade Rush]. Rhythmically, the soldiers pierced their swords forward with a shout. There really wasn't much technique behind the shout, all it was for was to intimidate the opponent. With all that pressure and intimidation, our soldiers could then deal a swift attack. I smiled, “It's not just my methods, General Han, your command over the troops has also

contributed greatly to their improvement. Has anything happened with the Royal Army as of late?”

Han Yuan said, “Not much. A few of the noble princelings quit the Royal Army because the training is too rough, but I let them go. Either way, we’ve had a lot of new recruits!”

“Oh?” I smiled, “I thought that no one showed much interest in the Royal Army?”

Han Yuan smiled back, “That was before. Since the last battle where general lead us to victory against two thousand Hybrid Demons, our reputation has vastly improved. Not to mention the fact that our wage rate is relatively generous, so a lot of the young men in the empire have been clamoring to join the Royal Army. If we didn’t have a quota, we would probably have at least thirty thousand troops in our army.”

“How many do we have in total now?”

“We started with twenty thousand troops, along with eight thousand newly recruited. The new recruits still have to work on their battle potential, but that’s no matter. Xiao Lie and I have been training them, and with another two weeks they’ll catch up with the rest of the army.”

“Good, excellent work!”

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Right then, a messenger dashed into camp on a horse, carrying a golden scroll, shouting, “Urgent Report! Urgent Report! Royal Army General Li Xiao Yao, accept this command!”

I quickly galloped over and slid off my horse, “I am Li Xiao Yao!”

The messenger also slid off his horse and opened up the scroll, “News from the Sea of No Return, a large number of Hybrid Demons have gathered onto boats and are crossing the sea. Very soon, they’ll reach the southern banks of the Sea of No Return. His majesty has decided to personally lead the troops into battle, leading the seven main armies against the Hybrid Demons. Both the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army are among the troops being called upon. His majesty has specially

ordered Li Xiao Yao to lead the entire Royal Army to join this battle. Bring your troops immediately to the southern banks of the Sea of No Return!”

I received the scroll and nodded, “Understood, we will immediately set out!”

The messenger smiled, “General Li, thank you for the trouble. Please set out as soon as possible. If you arrive late, none of us will be able to take the consequences!”

“Understood!”

.....

At the same time, I heard a bell ring beside my ear. It was a military command from the empire. A fleet of boats were arriving at the Sea of No Return carrying large numbers of Hybrid Demon troops. As such, King Robert is planning on sending troops to confront them—

“Ding!”

System Notification: Please note, a large number of Hybrid Demons are crossing the Sea of No Return. All players in the military, please make your preparations. It is of absolute necessity that we prevent the Hybrid Demons outside of the forests on the Southern Banks and halt their advance upon our territory. Furthermore, killing the Hybrid Demons will result in proportionate rewards, as well as achievement points and a potential promotion in the army. Fight bravely, fight for honor, and fulfill your Destiny!

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It looked like this was a server event. Most of the players in Tian Ling City had joined some kind of military position. The only question now was, how many Hybrid Demons had arrived, and if there were enough for everyone to kill? But, seeing as there was a reward and achievement, then we must join the event. Besides, if I wanted to eventually rule all seven kingdoms, then I must start by gaining a foothold here in Tian Ling City. My current position as the General of the Royal Army is only a Lieutenant General’s ranking, which is far from what I need. Some of the noble

princelings of Tian Ling City didn't even feel the need to pay their respects to a minor officer like me.

I raised the command and turned around to address Han Yuan and Xiao Lie, "You heard right? Begin assembling the troops and preparing the provisions so that we can set out. Our destination is the Sea of No Return!"

Han Yuan excitedly nodded, "Yes sir!"

While he was excited, I couldn't bring myself to raise my spirits. Seeing as the Hybrid Demon Armies were invading, it was bound to make a turn for the worse. It was very likely that one of the Demon Kings would appear. Of all the NPCs in Tian Ling City, who could possibly stand against a Hybrid Demon King?

Chapter 780: Battle At the Sea of No Return

Outside of Tian Ling City, the brush was trampled flat by the people. There was a sea of players rushing out of the city towards the Sea of No Return. I could see insignias of the great Tian Ling City armies on all of the player's shoulders. The only insignia that was absent was the Royal Army. For some reason, the Royal Army wasn't a part of the system and didn't allow players to enter. Although, this wasn't bad in itself. At least it would help maintain absolute obedience from the soldiers. I, for one, did not have confidence that I'd be able to maintain absolute command over the players. After all, current society is very individualistic and nobody is willing to completely follow another's commands.

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The first row of the Royal Army was made up of eight thousand knights who were all humans. The middle section was made up of foot soldiers, while the back section was all barbarians. There were around five thousand of them. The five thousand that Long Xing and Xia Ye had brought with them had been separated by me into the different sections so that they learn to be agreeable with the other soldiers. I had Xiao Lie and Han Yuan take command. In the beginning, there was disagreement, but it had decreased by quite a bit. At the very least, they listen to commands. Otherwise, there would be no way for us to maintain our battle power.

"General!"

Han Yuan quickened his step and caught up with me, "Whose commands will we be following? And who will be leading this battle against the Hybrid Demons?"

I shook my head, "Not sure, we probably won't know until the Sea of No Return. Princess Pearl won't ignore us, don't worry. She still has high hopes for us!"

Han Yuan smiled cheerfully, "Sir, how long do you think that this battle

will last?”

I grunted, “Not sure, probably at least three days?”

“Why?”

I shook my head without an answer. How could I explain to an NPC that the event is restricted to 72 hours? Han Yuan wouldn't necessarily understand so there was no reason for me to explain.

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In the [Zhan Long] guild chat, Wan Er and Qing Qian, the two vice guild masters, were instructing everyone to head to the Sea of No Return. Most of the Zhan Long camp was camped at Dragon City, and more likely than not, Frost would also bring the Dragon City Knights to reinforce us. Besides, the Dragon City Army had proven its strength and Frost herself was one of the only people who could stand against a Hybrid Demon King.

After an hour, around thirty thousand players from the Royal Army had arrived at the southern map of the Sea of No Return. When our soldiers made it out of the forest, we could see the endless sea before us. There was still around 2.5 km between us and the shore. The land before us was going to be our battlefield against the Hybrid Demons. Even now, I could see countless monsters riding on ships that covered the horizon.

Not far from us, I saw an officer raise a crimson flag and shout, “Commander of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao, prepare for orders!”

I nodded, “Here!”

He said, “I ask that the commander of the Royal Army begin setting up a formation here. The Flame Dragon Army will be beside you. His Majesty hopes that you will provide reinforcements to the Flame Dragon Army so that center won't be without support.”

I smiled, “Understood.”

The messenger glanced back at me and said, “General Li, follow me to the General's camp!”

“Alright....”

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I tried to imagine what this tent would be like. It'd probably be a bunch of old fogies gathered around a flag, all of them fighting to be the first to battle. Although, those would probably be the first to get killed. Yup, who knows if that's what would happen?

I turned around to look at everyone and said, "General Han Yuan, General Xiao Lie, General Long Xing, General Xia Ye, I will leave for a moment. Immediately begin setting up our defenses and bring out the battle weapons. Let us expel them from our shores before a single one lands!"

Xia Ye laughed, "Understood. General, please don't worry!"

"Good."

I reigned in my horse and followed behind the messenger. I saw hundreds of people along the way. There were both players and NPCs. The Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army camps were set up along both sides, as though they were there to protect the king. My Royal Army and the Flame Dragon Army, on the other hand, were on the side, somewhat further from the rest. But for us, it wasn't bad. At least we weren't set up five km away like some of the slag armies. That was truly a tragedy.

A crimson royal flag fluttered in the wind hanging on a high pole around ten meters tall. Who knew how they managed to raise such a high flag...

"My lord?"

The messenger looked back at me and saw that I was wandering around. Impatiently, he said, "My lord, please hasten yourself. His majesty has important matters to discuss!"

I nodded and quickened my pace. I put away my Flying Scythe Horse and entered the king's tent with my Dragon Reservoir Sword. Golden light flashed everywhere from the treasure that filled the room. Even the fur rug that covered the ground was lined with golden embroidery. I couldn't help but feel a little sour in my heart. So this is what the blood and sweat of the common people was being used for. If this was the state of an

impromptu war tent, just imagine how the Tian Ling City king normally lived.

“The lord Li Xiao Yao of the Royal Army has arrived!” The guard outside the tent announced in a loud voice.

With my sword, I slowly walked in, only to see that all of the officials were staring at me strangely. It was as though I were a weirdo. Some of them were even pointing and murmuring, “That’s Li Xiao Yao, the new general of the Royal Army. He had even scolded the son of the marquis. What a terrifying man. I heard that his Royal Army had managed to kill two thousand Hybrid Demons. How could such a vulgar man be on par with the Hybrid Demons? It has to be a fluke.”

I didn’t say anything in response and continued forward. Princess Pearl greeted me and reached out for my hand and brought me before his majesty. I stood beside her. It was clear that Princess Pearl already thought of me as a close aid. This kind of treatment was something that the other generals couldn’t even dream about. Besides, Pearl was naturally beautiful, and was the only daughter of the king, and thus the only princess of the empire. Who knew how many noble lords wanted to earn the affection of the Princess Pearl? Unfortunately for them, Pearl seemed to put much more care into soldiers who fought for the country, rather than the ones who only said pretty words.

King Rob glanced at me without any emotion, “Seeing as the general of the Royal Army has arrived, then let us begin our discussion. Generals, how should this battle be fought?”

At that moment, a dark faced general walked over and said, “I think that we should urge the navy to attack first, while the Hybrid Demons are still at sea. That way, they won’t be able to reach the shores and the territories of Tian Ling City will remain pure from their ravaging!”

The crown prince Theodore immediately laughed, “General Luke must be joking. There’s only 50,000 people in the Tian Ling City navy, their battle power is limited. Not to mention the fact that it’ll take them half a day to arrive. They can’t possibly make it in time. And, even if they did, our

small navy would never be able to stand against the Hybrid Demons. The people who sink to the bottom would be us, not those monsters.”

Luke stiffened. His face was starting to turn crimson, “Your highness must be overestimating those Hybrid demons a bit. I’ve fought against them once, and they are nowhere near as terrifying as the legends say. After all, they are also made up of flesh and blood. In the end, they will go down with the sweep of a blade.”

Theodore coldly laughed, “That is all just prattle.”

“Your highness!” Luke bit back his words.

Right then, Pearl warmly smiled, “How about this. The general with the most experience with the Hybrid Demons currently present is General Li Xiao Yao. How about we let him give some input as to how we proceed?”

Everyone turned their heads towards me. I rested my hand on my hilt and looked to the king, “There are many different types of Hybrid Demon soldiers. One of them is known as a Plunderer, and is a flight type being. They are quick as lightning and their sharp claws can pierce through iron shields. In other words, there’s every possibility that those Plunderers are on the ships. It doesn’t seem very viable for us to attack them from both flanks using our navy.”

King Rob furrowed his brow, “So it was like that. Then there is no need for us to waste time on discussing a battle on the water. Naval Commander, have your troops immediately begin creating Iron Sheeted Boats, so that we may block an attack from the waters.”

A tall and thin general knelt before the king and said, “Yes, your majesty!”

Right then, the prudent second prince posed a question, “Actually, there’s something I don’t understand!”

“Oh, what is it, Owen?” King Rob answered.

Owen continued, “Father, the Sea of No Return is typically controlled by the Sea Demon tribe. They are incredibly cruel and savage, and are superior in underwater combat. Furthermore, they use iron weapons. Just

two hundred years ago, when the empire fought against the Hybrid Demons, we sent out 300,000 soldiers to the Sea of No Return, only to have them completely decimated. This was largely due to the hooks and chisels that the Sea Demons used. Ordinarily, these Sea Demons are extremely protective of their territory and would never allow any other tribes to enter. But... this time, the Hybrid Demon armies were actually able to safely cross the ocean. Why is that?"

King Rob was puzzled by the question, "This..."

Theodore narrowed his eyes, "Brother, are you saying... that the Sea Demons of the Sea of No Return have succeeded in an agreement with the Hybrid Demons?"

Owen nodded, "That's right, that's the only possible explanation for this. The Sea Demons and the Hybrid Demons have joined hands. It's highly possible that we will not only be faced against Hybrid Demons, but also the Sea Demon tribe! So, I support Pearl's input. We cannot enter the Sea of No Return, or else it will be meaningless suicide!"

"What?!"

A large bearded man audibly gasped, "I've already ordered my troops to scour the coast and make sure that none of the Hybrid Demons land. This..."

Pearl reacted first, "Oh no, General Smith, immediately call your troops back!"

Chapter 781: Flame Axe Troops, Attack!

Fire flared up in Smith's eyes. Clearly, this commander of the "Freezing Star Army" cherished his soldiers. He clenched his teeth and asked, "Just what monsters...?"

The messenger wiped some sweat off his forehead and said, "I couldn't completely make out their bodies. All I could see were these tentacle like ropes pierce through the boats and then drag the soldiers into the sea. Furthermore, there were these fish like monsters carrying halberds and cutting everyone down. There was so much blood that the sea was dyed red.

Smith took a sharp breath, his expression extremely ugly.

"General Smith, are you ok?" On the side, a middle aged general smirked as he fiddled with a red scarf tied around his arm, "Losing two thousand warriors, if it were me, I would not be feeling well at all. I think that the Freezing Star Army only has nine thousand men total? With this loss, there aren't many of you left. Ah, you were too impatient. How could you have sent your soldiers out so carelessly?"

Smith spun around and roared at the general, "Louis, mind your own f*cking business. You better keep that red silk of yours close and hide far in the back. Otherwise, if you die, that young beautiful wife of yours will only have to wrap that silk scarf around her finger to console her loneliness!"

Louis was enraged, "Smith, you b*st*rd!"

Theodore silenced them, "Silence! The great battle is before us and you lot actually have the heart to argue about small matters like this!?"

Everyone shut up then. Theodore looked over at the king and said, "Father, how do you think we should approach this battle? In one hour, the Hybrid Demon warships will reach the shores."

King Rob tightened his grip around the royal sword and narrowed his eyes, "Bring out the Magic Crystal Cannons. As the Hybrid Demon War

Boats enter the port, we'll shoot them down in the sea. There's no need for reserve!"

"Yes father!" Theodore immediately sent out the order.

King Rob then said, "The Hybrid Demon Armies will soon reach our shores. For this battle, we have moved millions of the empire's soldiers. This is a battle of life and death. Generals, this is a time where we must work together to protect the empire and everyone's homes!"

All of the generals nodded their heads in agreement. "Yes your majesty!"

King Rob then asked, "Now, before the battle, are there any more suggestions?"

The tent was silent and nobody spoke up.

I glanced around. Either way, there was no need for me to be afraid of offending the king. And so, I boldly said, "While the center of the army is formed here, it does not give us much of an advantage nor does it have any good vantage points. Furthermore, there's a hood on top of the tent to block any sea winds, even though you can't see the sea from here. I suggest that you take the top off of the tent and raise the throne. This way, his majesty will be able to clearly see the battle situation and react to any changes at a moment's notice."

"You, Li Xiao Yao!"

A sixty year old general glared at me, his hand on his hilt as he roared, "Do you not know that our king is second to none? This awning is a ceremony that has been passed down throughout the generations. This is the utmost honor which a king must receive. And yet, you actually dare suggest that we take it off? Just what are you planning? Unless, you, Li Xiao Yao, have long coveted the holy royal weapons?"

我大惊，忍不住笑了：“老人家何必那么欲加之罪，我只不过说是拆了中军的帐篷，你就说我谋反，你到底是什么人？”

I was stunned and smiled, "There's no need for a man as old as you to be so vindictive. All I suggested was to take off the top, not rebellion. Just who are you?"

Pearl whispered to me, "He's the Jin Marquis, Luo Si. He's the father of that Luo Te you fired!"

I gaped, "No wonder. Clearly he's just settling a private debt publically...."

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The Jin Marquis spun around and said to King Rob, "Your Majesty, Li Xiao Yao does not harbor any good will and is extremely disrespectful to his majesty. I think that you should save yourself the worry and deal with him now! A rebel like him who disrespects the royal power should not be left alone. Please, your majesty, give the order!"

Pearl quickly shouted back, "Marquis, since when was it your turn to get on such a high horse? Every one of Li Xiao Yao's words are backed by military strategy. Taking off the top will allow the commander to see the entire situation. This move gives the commander the ability to see every detail of the battlefield. This is the most basic common sense. Besides, father will have a much better vantage point. What is wrong with that?"

"Your highness Princess Pearl!"

The Marquis looked at Pearl and smiled, "I think that this Li Xiao Yao was born rather handsome. Princess Pearl, is it possible that you hold secret feelings for him, and that is why you choose to help him so?"

"Shut up!" Pearl pulled out her sword.

Right then, King Rob finally stood up. His voice barely louder than a whisper, but the rage was clear, "Alright already. Send out the orders, take off the top of the middle tent and raise the observation deck. General Li Xiao Yao's words are exactly what I had intended before. Marquis, there's no need for you to speak any more. I know a bit about the situation by which your son was kicked out of the Royal Army. I hope that you will choose to stop pursuing this matter. Li Xiao Yao is a man capable of bringing honor to the Royal Army. That in itself is more important than many other matters!"

"Your majesty...."

Marqui Louis stiffened and lowered his head, “His majesty is wise! I will follow your every command!”

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And thus, this small argument seemed to be resolved. Even so, I could feel the heat of everyone’s glances on my back. This was an extremely uncomfortable feeling. It was as though I were a piece of meat, and they were the vultures, waiting to use me and eat me up. I much preferred the feeling I got when I fought with [Zhan Long]. We all looked out for each other, and there was no difference in class, rank or race. We were all brothers who would fight together. However, at the same time, I couldn’t give up on the Royal Army that I had spent so much blood and sweat to bring up. All I could do was endure for a little while. This was, after all, an experience that I must undergo. It was just as that old b*st*rd had said, my personality and morals were too stiff. I must continue to refine myself so that I can truly become an invincible warrior.

Very soon, the top of the tent was taken down. I could finally see the treasures behind—There were troops and horses. Clothing, tigers, axes, bows and arrows. They were all set up, and hidden from view. A group of Imperial Guards were watching over the supplies. From what I understood, those arrows were only given to the most impressive generals in the battle. The battle axe was given to those who were just and righteous. All in all, each treasure had its own meaning. The specifics, however, were unclear to me.

Light flashed on the horizon and I could see masses of battle ships inching closer to the beach. This time, the Hybrid Demon Army was truly bringing out all of its forces from the nest. This would be a struggle of life and death.

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Pearl looked towards the distance and ordered, “All troops, send out your spearmen to the beaches. Have them set up the antlers to stop the boats from reaching shore. We’ll crowd them in the shallows. Afterwards, we’ll use the Magic Crystal Cannons to deal a barrage of attacks. This way, the

Hybrid Demons will suffer enormous losses when they reach the shore. Then, when the Plunderers reach the shores, we'll rain them with arrows!"

All of the leading NPCs gave a firm nod, "Yes Your Majesty!"

The second prince Theodore squinted and said, "Let's wait quietly then. It's almost time to start motivating the troops. If we manage to win this war in one battle, these Hybrid Demons will probably be too scared to touch our borders for the next ten years!"

Pearl smiled, "I hope so!"

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After a few minutes, the Hybrid Demon boats began to approach the shore. We could practically see the details of the flags on their ship. I was stunned to see the flag of the revered one standing amongst the boats. It was the Ba Huang City Prince, Luo Lin's flag. The men on that boat must be the soldiers from Ba Huang City who had been turned.

"It's the revered one!"

Pearl narrowed her eyes as she stared into the horizon. She let out a sigh and smiled, "Big brother, there was a time when Luo Ling and you were known as the two most elite men of Tian Ling. And now, he is a Hybrid Demon King. Isn't that quite the irony?"

Theodore gripped the sword at his side and suddenly stood up, "Father, may my Flame dragon Army be the first to set out? I will stop that traitor Luo Lin's troops and keep them a hundred meters out!"

King Rob looked down at his son and smiled, "No need to rush. Your Flame Dragon Army will get its chance to battle. How about someone else go?"

Everyone nodded, "Crown Prince, you will eventually inherit the throne, you cannot use your emotions at a time like this!"

Theodore had no choice but to nod in agreement. The second prince Owen stood up, "Father, then how about my Xia Yu Army go?"

The two princes were both vying for the throne, and so, whoever earned

the most achievements would be the most qualified. This was a principle that everyone knew, just didn't say out loud.

Who knew that King Rob would continue on, “Owen, your Xia Yu Army is a main force of the country. You should not go out to battle so carelessly. How about this, we’ll have the Flame Axe Army lead by Marquis Louis go out for the first battle? Marquis, this is a battle for this empire’s survival. You won’t deny a chance to fight for the country, will you?”

Marquis Louis clenched his teeth and nodded, “Your majesty, I am willing to fight. However, I’d like to make my son, Luo Te the deputy general of the Flame Axe Troops so that he may set out with me. How is that?”

King Rob cheerfully replied, “Alright then. Immediately deploy Luo Te from the Southern Troops and promote him to Deputy General. He will go to battle with the Marquis. I hope that you bring pride to our country in this initial fight. Each troop, hold their positions and watch as the Flame Axe Army breaks through the enemy defense!”

“Yes, Your Majesty!”

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I furrowed my brow and kept quiet. Pearl seemed to notice my hesitation and whispered, “The Flame Axe Troops have 45,000 people in it. They are the number five army in the nation. Not only that, but they are strong. It is the most rational decision to have them fight.”

I smiled back, “Your Highness must be talking about their ability to subdue bandits right? I’m afraid that the Marquis’ die hard attempt to make his son a deputy general is about to fail. He has severely underestimated the strength of Luo Lin.”

Pearl smiled back, “As long as you know. Just wait and see what happens. Prepare for battle. We must block the Revered One’s first attack!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

Chapter 782: The Flame Axe Army'S Crushing Defeat

Columns of soldiers marched along the coastline. Flagbearers waved their banners in the wind, the insignia of a battle axe embroidered into them. The forty thousand soldiers from the Flame Battle Axe Army quickly crossed the beach. Several of the cavalymen were carrying heavy wooden logs. They urged their horses deep into the sea and began to stab the pikes into the ground. However, the sand was too soft and runny, decreasing the chances of success for these pikes to stop any ships.

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“Withdraw and maintain your guard!” Robert stood at the front of the army. He rode on a magnificent horse and loudly shouted orders. He turned around to glance at the observation deck. He was looking for my position. I could see a cold smile on his face, as though he were mocking me. After all, he was the general of the Flame Axe Army and he carried the Zhe Nan family name. He was two whole tiers above me in terms of position, and so naturally he was pleased with himself.

I couldn’t help but laugh at this. The emotional intelligence of these NPCs was getting higher and higher, they were practically no different from real people.

“They’re coming...”

I could see Pearl’s lip tremble as she said, “Let us see just how much strength and power our canons carry!”

King Rob smiled, “Pearl, don’t worry too much. These are Dragon Crystal Canons. I don’t expect them to fail your expectations. Besides, the Flame Axe Army isn’t a ragtag band. There is nothing to worry about with them holding the front lines!”

Pearl nodded, “Yes, understood, father!”

I rested my hand on the hilt of my Dragon Reservoir Sword and stood beside Pearl. Without moving, I stared into the distance and watched as

the boats drew nearer. At the same time, I heard a messenger relay an order behind me. He wanted the Royal Army to begin preparations to fill gaps at a moment's notice. Although, in reality, even I didn't have much confidence in the battle power of the Flame Axe Army.

A few minutes later, I could already see the Hybrid Demon Warships on the coastline. They were around three hundred meters from the beach and had finally entered our range of fire.

"Hua!"

King Rob suddenly stood up. "Hua La La." His armor clamored as he did so. He raised his arm and let it fall, yelling, "Fire the Dragon Crystal Cannons!"

The orderly swung the signal flag with all his might, motioning to the soldiers down below. Cannons exploded all along the coast. Countless Dragon Crystal Cannons, Magic Crystal Canons, and Volcanic Canons let loose. Smoke and powder floated over us in massive clouds. The next moment, I saw numerous fiery lights on the ocean's surface. It was just as the king had said, the Dragon Crystal Cannons and the Volcanic Cliff Canons were truly terrifying weapons. A direct hit would smash the Hybrid Demon boats into smithereens!

Explosions occurred all along the horizon. The Dragon Crystal Cannon's enormous strength created surges of waves that crashed against the shore. The Flame Dragon Army, Xia Yu Army and the Royal Army's flags all fluttered fiercely from the shockwave. Quite a few of the flags had actually ripped off their poles from the momentum. [Legend], [Hero's Mound] and [Zhan Long]'s front lines were not far away, and so they had been pushed back several feet. Just the opening act of this battle was enough for everyone to gulp in amazement.

However, even while facing against such a fierce cannons, the soldiers of the Revered One seemed to care nothing about their lives and continued rushing their boats towards the beach. It was like there was no end to the number of boats we needed to hit. Even while we sunk a few, a dozen more would take their places. I could see the robes of the Revered One,

rocking with the waves, giving off a ferocious aura.

Very soon, we could see the individual demonified soldiers. Originally, they were soldiers of the Ba Huang City army, but now they were all labeled under one name—Warriors of the Revered One. They were all Level 2-4 Hybrid Demons. There were also differences amongst their strength levels. Some of the smaller ones had the strength of a level 7 Hybrid Demon, and were between Level 135-145; Practically on par with many of the players today.

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“Almost at contact!”

Pearl gripped her fist and muttered, “Father!”

A cold light flashed in King Rob’s eyes, “Pearl, calm down. Look at your Brothers, they’re still able to sit in their seats.”

Pearl bit her lip and said, “I’m sorry father, but I cannot achieve that.”

“No matter. Very soon, you will learn just how to deal with these damned Hybrid Demons!”

One after another, the ships charged towards the beaches. “Peng peng peng!” Their hulls smacked against the ground. The front of these ships were wrapped in steel plating, and they quickly smashed apart the wooden pikes. One after another, enormous planks fell into the water and the Revered One’s Warriors came ashore with battle axes and swords in hand.

The Flame Axe Army had already constructed a defensive line. A large group of shield bearing soldiers were guarding the front lines. The shields that they carried were all about the same height as a man. Furthermore, the defensive line looked almost like a shield wall. Rays of light pierced through the chinks and cracks between each shield, shining upon the soldiers faces and revealing the terror and uncertainty of the future they faced.

While the Flame Axe Army was one of the empire’s main forces, it had never quite gone up against the Hybrid Demons. And so, naturally, they wouldn’t be able to maintain complete calm as they faced these terrifying

creatures for the first time. Some of the soldiers were even drenched in cold sweat as hot tears formed at the corner of their eyes. It was as though they knew that they weren't going to make it past this night.

Night fell and the hordes of Revered One's soldiers continued surging against the Flame Axe Army. Cannons exploded in the distance endlessly. As before, the cannons on the banks continued to fire at the large ships at sea. The Revered One had brought at least a hundred thousand soldiers. Killing them all at sea was not a very viable possibility.

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"Prepare!"

Marquis Louis drew his longsword and shouted, "Hold your positions!"

In the next moment, the countless warriors rushed against the defense formation. They stabbed their long blades and swords into shields, desperately clawing at any opening in the shield. The second a gap opened, they would drive in and take a bit right out of the neck of the soldier behind it. Screams rose into the air. The Flame Axe soldiers valiantly fought back, pushing their spears forth. In the end, these Hybrid Demons weren't invincible, and many of them ended up dying on the stick.

"Halt!" The marquis roared. He charged forward with his sword in hand and cut down one of the Revered One's archers. Blood spurt forward onto his face, creating a fierce look. However, the marquis didn't think twice and continued his efforts in holding the front lines.

"Father, careful!" Robert shouted.

In the dark, an enormous figure suddenly rushed onto shore from the war boats. It swung a battle axe in the air and roared. "Peng!" The axe smashed into the shield. A dozen or more of the Flame Axe soldiers were sent flying. Under the moonlight, the figure looked even more terrifying and its screeches pierced through the hearts of everyone who heard.

I stood at the edge of the deck. Just watching made my heart wrench with panic. I shouted, "Raise the torches!"

Specks of light rose up all along the coastline as the Flame Axe Soldiers raised their torches. Under the firelight, I could see that the gigantic figure was covered with some kind of needle. It looked like a half beast half man that was decomposing. It was called "The Decimator." It was a Level 7 Hybrid Demon, Level 144 monster. No wonder the Flame Axe soldiers couldn't stand against it. The monster's stats must be insanely high.

These "Decimators" appeared all across the battlefield, and very soon, gaps began to appear in the Flame Axe Army's shield wall. It was not long before it would collapse completely.

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The Marquis Louis was soaked in blood. He yelled as he was chased by three of the Decimators. His own battle axe had even been chopped in half. I could see that one of his arms had been nearly chopped off, rendering it useless. He screamed as he fell off his horse. Luckily, he was quickly saved by a general and successfully retreated. Louis was shivering from his fright. He shouted, "No, we can't, the Flame Axe Army cannot hold against this. Retreat!"

And just like that, the reputable, fifty thousand man Flame Axe Army was completely defeated in less than ten minutes.

"Kill them! Kill them all!" A voice shouted from the darkness. The more I focused on it, the more familiar it sounded. It was Luo Lin. Even while we could hear his voice, we couldn't tell where it was hiding.

The Revered One's Army fought like crazy against the Flame Axe Army. In the end, the defeated army was chased back towards its own formation in a small wave. The reality was, the Flame Axe Army was the first to fight, and against such a strong enemy, there were only two results, either to be completely decimated, or to be forced back. And if they weren't fast enough, they wouldn't only drag their own forces down.

"D*mm*t!"

The crown prince Theodore stood up in a rush of anger. He pulled out his sword and swung it, yelling, "Flame Dragon Army, heed my call, release the arrows on the Hybrid Demons. Do not let them near our formation!"

Hooves clattered against the ground. The one handed Marquis dropped to his knees before us, clutching his bleeding wrist. He glared at Theodore and shouted, "Your highness! My Flame Axe warriors are mixed into the Revered One's troops. Please, take back your order. Otherwise, my entire army will be killed!"

Theodore coldly smiled, "You're a defeated general, what right do you have to say as much? If the Revered One's army gets close to our central camp and endangers father's safety, will you be able to take that responsibility?"

The Marquis stiffened and shouted, "Theodore!"

Theodore raised his arm, "Release!"

A mass of arrows flew into the air and rained down upon the ground, striking into human and monster flesh. While the Revered One's soldiers were being shot down, so were the Flame Axe soldiers. They were being killed at the same rate. I could see the Marquis' heart being wrenched out as his comrades died under the arrows of their fellow soldiers. He knelt before the heavens and cried out, "Gods, how could you allow such cruel slaughter?!"

I clenched my teeth and walked up, "Your majesty, killing people like this will affect the morale of your soldiers. How about you stop the arrows?"

Theodore coldly looked at me, "General Li, aren't you being a little too soft hearted? You've witnessed the Revered One's cruelty. If we allow him anywhere near the core of our army, can you even imagine the consequences? Are you planning on taking that responsibility?"

I stared into Theodore's face, and suddenly felt a shiver run down my back as I realized just how cold hearted this crown prince was. I could barely recognize him as a person. Pearl tugged on my arm, signaling me to not speak any more.

King Rob stood up and furrowed his brow, "General Li's words are not without reason. But, is there really no other way better than to shoot these Flame Axe Soldiers down?"

I took a deep breath and said, “I am willing to lead my Royal Army forth and hold off the Revered One’s troops so that the Flame Axe Army has time to retreat!”

A peculiar expression flashed in King Rob’s eyes, “General Li, have you thought through what you are proposing?”

“Yes sir!”

“Then go!”

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I walked forward and leapt off the deck. I quickly summoned my Flying Scythe Horse and charged forward. I then summoned my little tiger and quickly dashed towards the Royal Army’s encampment. At the same time, I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and Zhen Yue Blade, killing all of the Revered One’s Soldiers in my path. These were all the henchman of Luo Lin. Whenever I thought of the pain that Frost suffered when she was betrayed by him, an unquenchable anger rose up in my throat. No matter whether or not we could actually hold off those Northern Hybrid Demons, Luo Lin must die!

Chapter 783: Small Ranked Generals

“Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, atten hut!”

Before I even reached the formation, I shouted, “Take two thousand cavalymen and two thousand foot soldiers and follow me. We’re going to go and kill some Hybrid Demons from the Revered One’s state and rescue the Flame Axe army!”

Han Yuan immediately nodded and shouted, “First and Second Cavalry squad, follow me!”

Xiao Lie immediately organized two thousand barbarian foot soldiers and marched straight out the camp. The speed at which the four thousand men got out of the formation was incredibly fast. In the blink of an eye, they were lined up right behind me. Xiao Lie shouted from afar, “Commander, what will we do?”

I replied, “Guard the formation!”

“Yes sir!”

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Under the moonlight, my Dragon Reservoir Sword gleamed with a frightening light. I raised my hand and pulled out my Zhen Yue Blade and charged forth. I immediately cut down one of the critically wounded Revered One soldiers. I then directed my sword towards a Level 7 Hybrid Demon Decimator. That b*st*rd roared and turned around, swinging its battle axe like crazy. Even so, I didn’t waver and parried the blow. “Keng!” My Flying Scythe Horse slid back from the impact of the blow. The Decimator wasn’t much better off, and was thrown back three meters from my own blade. It roared and came at me again. I used a [Blade Rush] and pierced right through its throat. The other Royal Army soldiers who were close by began to hack away at the monster. With another sweep of my sword, the Decimator screeched and fell to the ground.

Before us, the endless Revered Ones continued cutting down the running Flame Axe soldiers. After this battle, the Flame Axe soldiers numbers had

been cut in half currently. But if we let the Flame Dragon Army continue their rain of arrows, I'm afraid that there would be few survivors.

I watched as arrows fell from the sky, killing both the Flame Axe soldiers and the Hybrid Demons. I could see the goosebumps rising on Han Yuan's skin and I could hear the sorrow in his voice, "How did this happen?"

I swung my sword and shouted, "Stop the arrows! I will hold off the Revered One's armies!"

Even so, arrows still flew into the air behind the Flame Dragon army's flaming red shields. Do they not follow the orders of a general!?

"Kill!"

Han Yuan lead the charge, but before long, several Royal Army cavalymen fell under the rain of arrows shot by the Flame Dragon Army. Were those ruthless b*st*rds going to kill my men like the Flame Axe Army?

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I stopped thinking as much and charged towards the Flame Axe formation. "Peng!" I rammed right into their shield wall, knocking down a group of the soldiers. I then threw a Seven Star Fragment Slash into the group of archers, only harming them. They all gaped at me. I pulled out my stars and shouted, "I am the general of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao. Under orders from his royal highness, I am here to fight the Revered One's army. If you dare make another move, I will kill you along with them!"

They were all stupefied. They were the number one army in Tian Ling City, and were spoken of as heroes and noblemen. There probably wasn't a single person in Tian Ling City that would dare raise a sword against them. Today, however, I dared to. Furthermore, I carried the arrow of his royal highness, forcing them to bow before me.

Among the crowd, a supervisor murmured, "I just received the orders to stop the arrows. Please, General Li, do not place the blame on us!"

I gave him a curt nod and turned back to face the enemy with Han Yuan and Xiao Lie.

Even though we only had four thousand men, our battle power was much stronger than the Flame Axe army. Especially the barbarian foot soldiers. These immensely strong barbarians held heavy shields and blades. Normal people wouldn't even be able to pick them up, much less fight with them. As such, one could imagine the defensive power that those shields contained. Furthermore, the weight of their blades only added to their battle potential. One after another, heads of the Revered One's soldiers went flying. There was experience to be taken, even as these soldiers were killing the enemy. The higher the level of the enemy, the more experience. In other words, as long as the Royal Army soldiers didn't die and I lead them to victory, then they'd become just as strong as a BOSS' existence. Just what kind of a future would that be?

Not only was I starting to feel my heart beat with excitement, the beckoning of battle further made my blood boil as I hacked through the crowd. Despite all of this, there were still many Royal Army soldiers being cut down behind me. This battle was completely a life for a life type situation.

Around twenty minutes later, we managed to cover long enough for all twenty thousand remaining Flame Axe soldiers to retreat. The Royal Army had lost several hundred people. I turned my horse around and shouted, "Turn back! Leave the rest to the Flame Dragon Army!"

Han Yuan said, "That's right. Why should we give our lives for those cold blooded b*st*rds of the Flame Dragon Army!?"

We led our troops back to our camp. I could see that countless Revered One's soldiers were still coming ashore. The foot soldier camp had already created a defense formation. The heavy iron shields and the extremely strong barbarians wouldn't easily allow the formation to fall. Furthermore, the skilled warriors and archers all switched to their long bows so that they could shoot long range through the armor of the warriors.

Not long after, a group of men and horses charged over. They looked extremely familiar. It was Li Mu, Wang Jian and the other Zhan Long cavalry! They had come to cut down the Hybrid Demons. Li Mu smiled, "Xiao Yao, vice guildmaster Wan Er wanted us to come here and assist the

Royal Army. Where should we form the defense line?”

I pointed to the left with my sword and said, “Right there. I’m thinking the NPC camp won’t be able to hold much longer. This way, we can give them some more support. Just stuff the entire [Zhan Long] camp there. They’ll be able to serve just as the Royal Army is right now.”

“Yes sir!”

Han Yuan looked over at the Steel Blade Horsemen with shock and exclaimed, “General, these.... These elite adventurers look very skilled. Are they your soldiers?”

I wryly smiled, “They are all my brothers and friends. Don’t worry, with them, the Royal Army will be safe!”

“Alright!” I could see a strong glimmer of hope in his eyes. It looked like the arrival of [Zhan Long] had increased the soldiers’ morale quite a bit.

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Guarding the frontlines, I continuously killed monsters, gaining more and more achievement points. Basically, every 1-3 Hybrid Demons I killed lead to one achievement point. It was a somewhat slow process. It looked like relying on killing monsters for a promotion wasn’t going to be an easy task.

The Revered One’s army’s came at us like an endless river. We had killed an amount equal to an entire army before the boats in the distance began to lessen. The Revered One’s warriors that were on the shore had mostly been killed. Even so, the Tian Ling City armies’ losses were also quite heavy. The Flame Dragon Army and the Xiao Yu Army had both lost over ten thousand men. Quite a few of the players in the player camp also died. After dying, they couldn’t enter the battlefield for another 25 hours. That was a very sad prospect.

At the very least, [Zhan Long]’s losses were bearable. We only lost four thousand. There was no helping it anyway, we had basically brought the entire guild here.

Before we had the chance to console ourselves over the death of our

comrades, the messenger dashed back into the Royal Army camp and shouted, "Generals, please report to the center tent."

There was no other way. I turned around to leave. The Flying Scythe Horse charged towards the center tent. On the way, my horse trampled over countless bodies that littered the ground. They were Hybrid Demon and Tian Ling soldiers alike. The sand had been dyed red with blood. Broken weapons lay scattered all over the ground. Under the moonlight, the landscape was truly a tragic scene.

I walked into the military tent with my sword. King Rob calmly sat on the throne and didn't say a word. Princess Pearl slightly bit her lip as I went to her side.

Soon after, Theodore and Owen both arrived in the military tent. I could tell that the two prince's armor had been exchanged for fresh sets. The embroidery that was sewn into the cape gleamed enchantingly under the light. Most of the other generals were also noblemen, dressed in finery. The only different ones were the marquis of the Flame Axe Army and me. The Marquis had lost a hand and was covered in blood, while my armor was covered in slashes and dents. Even my battle robe was covered in dried blood and several tears. The Dragon Reservoir Sword in my hand dripped with fresh blood.

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The marquis quietly sat on a chair. Normally, someone of his status wouldn't receive such special treatment. It was most likely due to the fact that he was wounded. Robert stood by his side. The difference between him and his father was that Robert's battle gear didn't have a drop of blood. He was the first to order the Flame Axe Army to retreat, and he was also the first to run.

After looking around the tent, Princess Pearl smiled. She said, "Generals and Colonels, everyone present is dressed so cleanly and nicely, what a rare sight. Why is it that Li Xiao Yao was the only one able to lead his troops against the fearsome Hybrid Demons and be able to pull out?"

The general of the Fierce Thunder Army, Lee' mouth twitched. He pulled

on the red silk on his arm and said, “Your highness, that’s not entirely true. There are other, smaller ranked generals who can take our places on the battlefield. There was no need for us to go out and fight with the smaller soldiers. That is because we understood how to utilize our position in the army to raise the morale of the soldiers, rather than act impulsively!”

Pearl smirked, “General Lee, dare I ask how many soldiers the Fierce Thunder army lost in that battle? And how many of the enemy did they kill?”

Lee’ face grew pale and he reported, “Twenty thousand of our men were wounded, and we lost seventeen thousand... We must’ve killed around three thousand?”

Pearl then asked, “General Li Xiao Yao, tell him how many the Royal Army killed.”

With a straight face, he replied. “Reporting to your highness, the Royal Army lost two thousand three hundred soldiers and killed five thousand Hybrid Demons!”

“General Lee, did you hear that?!”

Pearl slapped the table and said, “All day long, you each think of yourselves as the heroes of Tian Ling City, bragging about your greatness. And yet, you’re lax in the upkeep of your armies, letting them loose. Do not make any excuses before us. After this battle, I want every army in this nation to start instituting some changes. As for the promotion and demotion of rankings, I will discuss those with Father.”

All of the generals’ faces fell. Everyone knew just how important this battle was, but nobody would have predicted that Pearl would act so callously. After this battle, there would probably be a great shift in the balance of power between the noble families.

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Shock spread across Lee’ expression. He immediately knelt to the ground and wailed, “Your highness... I am guilty, I did not exert enough effort. I

ask that your highness give me a chance to atone for my crimes with an achievement!”

King Rob smiled reassuringly to him, “General Lee, there’s no need to panic. Stand up. The Revered One’s troops have already killed over seventy thousand of our men. I want to see just what kind of ace Luo Lin has hidden up his sleeve!”

Before he even finished speaking, we heard a terrifying screech from across the ocean. We could even faintly hear some men screaming with all their might—

“D*mm*t, those Fishmen have gone crazy!!”

Chapter 784: The Sea Demon King

“Fish men?”

Theodore stood up suddenly and ordered, “Just what is going on? Report!”

There was a bit of distance between the center army and the sea, so it was difficult to see anything clearly. Theodore must be very anxious.

Not long after, another messenger dashed forward and knelt before us, “Reporting! I do not know why, but the waves of the Sea of No Return suddenly became violent and tumultuous. Several Sea Demon Tribe members suddenly appeared. Of them, quite a few fishermen soldiers arrived on shore. It's clear that we're their target. Many of our soldiers who were burying bodies along the shore ended up dying under their halberds!”

Theodore stiffened, “Has the Sea Demon Tribe finally decided to break our agreement and fight against the human tribe?”

Pearl said, “Brother, you must've predicted that this would've happened already. Seeing as Luo Lin was able to safely cross the sea on a boat, then he must have reached an agreement with the Sea Demon Tribe. We must begin preparing for battle against them. Have the formation distance themselves from the sea. On land, the Sea Demon Tribe is not on par with us. As long as we don't enter the waters, we will have victory!”

Theodore nodded and looked over at the king, “Father, should we immediately send out the order for battle?”

King Rob nodded as well, “Theodore, you take point in the battle against the Sea Demon Tribe!”

Surprise and excitement flashed across Theodore's face. He glanced over at the second prince Owen's face. Owen didn't seem to have anything to say. So Theodore pulled out his sword and shouted, “Generals, aten hut! Immediately prepare your armies for battle. Everyone hold your current formations. Do not allow the Sea Demons to break into the central

formation. This time, no matter what, we must teach these ****ing Sea Demons a lesson about breaking trust with our empire!”

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I lept onto my horse and left the encampment. The atmosphere in the encampment was filled with intrigue and deception, I was already sick of it all!

[Zhan Long] and the Royal Army’s front lines had already broken out into battle. A large group of Steel Blade Horsemen and Barbarians fought side by side, creating an iron wall that kept the Sea Demons outside. Outside of the border, there were hundreds of scaly humans with scarlet skin. They swung their heavy halberds and battle blades and stuck out their slithery tongues as they pushed against our frontlines. While our arrows rained down upon the enemy, they dealt limited damage. Clearly, the defense of their scales was above average.

I turned my horse around and threw a slash onto one of the fishmen!

“16387!”

As I had predicted, their defense was extremely high. I read out the stats of the fishmen into the guild chat—

[Sea Demon Fishmen] (Hybrid Demon monster)

Level: 147

Attack: 15000-17000

Defense: 14000

Health: 700000

Skills: [Fishmen Armor] [Aerial Stab] [Halberd Whirlwind]

Introduction: Sea Demon Fishmen are a type of cursed humans, they obtained the defense and stamina of fish scales and have lived at the bottom of the sea for thousands of years. They continuously fought for survival with all the other creatures of the sea and eventually became a species of their own. However, they retained their traditions and habits as humans and come ashore from time to time to forge weapons. As such,

they became the creatures which are the most similar to humans in the sea.

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Li Mu swung his Neptune's Blade and said, "The fishmen's defense is just too strong. Motherf*cker, that [Fishmen Armor] probably increases their defense by 100%. Even the Steel Blade Horsemen are having difficulty cutting them down!"

I nodded. I did, however, notice that Han Yuan and the Royal Army managed to break through their defense. In a way, the Royal Army actually had a higher attack power than the Steel Blade Horsemen. The NPC army truly had limitless potential. Of course, players themselves were very talented, and could revive after they die. The NPC soldiers on the other hand, truly died and never came back.

Standing amongst the foot soldiers of the Royal Army, I helped hold off the enemy's onslaught of attacks. These fishmen were extremely fierce. One after another, they dealt rounds and rounds of [Halberd Whirlwind] onto us, slashing our heavy shields. Even the Barbarians were forced back by the strength of their attacks. Some of their arms were even bleeding. The marks on the shields revealed an even more terrifying sight.

"Hold your positions!"

Han Yuan shouted. As he did, he pointed at the group behind him and roared, "Newbies, use those riding skills you learned and go out and kill those fishmen. Aim for their open mouths! There's no scales or armor there to protect them. If you pierce through their head, then these shameless Sea Demons will shut up!"

Following that, 2000 new soldiers all got onto their horses and followed Han Yuan out of the camp. They surged forward like a river and rammed right into the enemy. Quite a few of our new soldiers had been recruited from the Battle Academy, so their technique was fairly advanced. With a flash of light and a couple of stabs, the fishmen would fall under the spears of our Horsemen.

I raised my Zhen Yue blade and spurred my horse forward. I led four

thousand Steel Blade Horsemen. We couldn't allow the fishermen to overwhelm our shield wall. The [Halberd Whirlwind]'s damage was just too great. If we let them continue their ravaging, then even if it were [Zhan Long]'s formation, we would lose our footing. In the distance, I could see that [Prague] and [Enemies at the Gate] had begun their battles. There isn't a single person that joins the military who doesn't dream of becoming a general who can command tens upon thousands of soldiers. And so, in this battle against the Sea Demon Tribe, every player would fight to earn as many points as they possibly could. They would never allow such a rare opportunity to pass.

A group of fishermen spat out their tongues and launched attacks against us. I said into the guild chat, "Attack the fishermen's mouths. You might be able to get more damage like that. Everyone can try it out. Archers, musketeers, aim for their mouths. That will greatly increase your damage!"

Everyone tested it out, and the effects were quite pleasing.

"Ya yaya...."

The fishermen screeched from the pain. They then threw their halberds into the crowd of human soldiers and switched to their long blades, creating some losses for our armies. Quite a few soldiers who hadn't made it onto their horses yet were pierced through by the weapons and killed. It was a devastating scene. However, the battle had already progressed to this point. The Royal Army, as well as the new soldiers, had already been thrown into the chaos. They had no choice but to face death without fear.

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The Sea of No Return was becoming increasingly tumultuous. Masses of fishermen appeared on the water's surface. They came upon us like waves. After killing a few of our soldiers, they would finally be cut down themselves. The fishermen's bodies began to pile up in the sea. Even the relatively weak armies were no longer afraid and were starting to grow a spine.

Even though they were superior in strength, the fishermen troops couldn't withstand the might of our cannons and determination. After close to

three hours of killing, we had finally decimated their army.

“Pei!”

Li Mu spat on a pile of fishmen bodies and said, “Motherf*cker, you killed seven thousand of my men. [Zhan Long] has less than 15,000 left!”

I asked, “How many achievement points did you receive?”

“Hehe, 71!”

“Not bad!”

“But of course! The Neptune’s Blade is very sharp.”

I waved my hand in the air, showing the Tian Ling City rankings list for achievement points. D*mn, I was actually ranked third. It must be because some of them had been split among the Royal Army troops—

Fang Ge Que Achievement Points: 224

Simple Achievement Points: 211

Xiao Yao Zi Zai Achievement Points: 197

Mu Xuan Achievement Points: 192

Cang Yue Achievement Points: 182

Q-Sword Achievement Points: 177

Jian Feng Han Achievement Points: 171

Ye Lai Achievement Points: 166

Cang Tong Achievement Points: 151

Drunken Spear Achievement Points: 147

.....

Of the top five in the rankings, four of them were all mages. This was an omen of the impact that mages would have later on in the game.

Thankfully, there wasn’t much distance between me and the top two. If the system was caring enough, I’d get some additional achievement points from commanding the Royal Army. At that point, I’d have the most achievement points. But, Fang ge Que and Simple had been clearing these

monsters like crazy!

Just as I was in the middle of my thoughts, a messenger arrived. The king was inviting us back!

I led my horse towards the central tents. I could see that all of the different generals had blood on their clothing. Some of them were even wounded. What astonished me was the fact that... The fishmen's blood was a pinkish red, but these generals were all covered in crimson blood. It must have been smeared on. It was human blood, these despicable b*st*rds!

"King Rob sat on the royal throne and said, "Generals, you have worked hard. This time, you have successfully chased away the fishmen armies from our shores! That in itself is an accomplishment!"

All of the generals cheered, "Your highness is wise and leads the armies to victory, you will be praised throughout the ages!"

I hadn't seen King Rob lead any armies, and so I didn't make the effort to kneel and sing those praises. I didn't bother to say anything either. I just remained standing beside Princess Pearl and smiled as I watched the officers flatter each other.

Theodore said, "Father, this time we were able to chase off the Fishmen Armies, and as such, the Sea Demon Tribe should keep its quiet for now. I suggest that we should end this battle of the Sea of No Return now. We should begin talking about when to return to the capital and discuss the details of our victory feast."

"Victory feast?"

I couldn't help but laugh, "The real enemy hasn't even appeared yet, isn't it a bit early to be celebrating!?"

I could feel Theodore's annoyance of me growing as he coldly said, "The Revered One's Armies have lost 110,000 men, and 17,000 of the fishmen troops are dead. I don't know how many more troops from the Hybrid Demon Territory there are for us to kill. However, there's no need for the Royal Army to worry about such groundless fears, nor is it their place to

use frightening words to scare our people!”

I lowered my voice and said, “Then, I ask that your highness wait a little longer. Within half an hour, the Hybrid Demon’s next attack will come!”

Theodore snorted and said, “Then I shall wait. What will you do if there isn’t!?”

In the end, right as Theodore’s challenge left his lips, a messenger suddenly rushed into the tent and shouted, “More Sea Demon troops have appeared! Its an army of terrifying Walrus Riders. Furthermore, the King of the Sea Demons, Han Lin is personally leading the charge!”

“What?”

King Rob stood up from his throne, “Han Lin?! The Sea Demon King... He’s actually siding with the Hybrid Demons?”

The messenger trembled and said, “Your majesty, one of the fishmen that we captured let out a secret... the Sea Demon King Han Lin is actually the ninth Hybrid Demon King!”

“That... That’s impossible!”

King Rob’s face was completely ashen.

Chapter 785: The Great Battle Before Us

The Sea Demon King Han Lin was the Ninth King of the Hybrid Demons?

I was startled. The Hybrid Demon King list had not yet been completely revealed. They could only be recorded as they appeared. However, I would never have imagined that the ninth Demon King would actually be the Sea Demon King. This only made my heart sink. Han Lin was now leading his tribe against the human empire. This meant that it was a planned attack by the Hybrid Demon Territory. Furthermore, since Luo Lin and Han Lin had come together, this meant that they had the confidence to win against the hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the armies of Tian Ling City.

I looked at the distant Royal Army formation and began to feel unsettled.

“Just what are these Sea Walrus Cavalry?” Owen asked in frustration.

Theodore said, “Second brother, the Sea Walrus Cavalry are very gentle creatures. They have both gills and lungs, which allows them to survive on both land and sea. They ordinarily do not attack humans. However, once they have been tamed by the Sea Demons, they turn into extremely terrifying mounts. Their charging power is extremely strong. I’m afraid that our defense line won’t be able to hold out for long. Father, you must make a decision.”

King Rob furrowed his brow in silence.

Pearl stood up and spoke, “Move the crossbow carts and aim them at the beach. Once a single Sea Walrus Cavalry steps foot onto the beach, they are to be immediately shot down. No matter what the cost, we must kill as many as we can. We cannot sit idly and wait!”

Not far from us, the Berserk Thunder Commander Les lowered his voice and said, “Your Majesty, there’s actually another way, that isn’t really considered a way. I don’t know if it is appropriate to say or not.”

King Rob boldly replied, “General Les, please continue!”

General Les took a deep breath and said, “While the Sea Walrus Calvary can survive on land, they habitually spend more time in the water. If you are going to go against them, how about we retreat five kilometers? We’ll fight the battle in the Fierce Wind Forest. If we fight the Sea Demons in the brush and forest, they won’t have the upper hand. In the forestry, their battle power will be much weaker than our cavalry.”

The deputy commander of the Flame Axe Army, Locke, also nodded, “I agree with General Les’ strategy. If we make this retreat and then play to our advantage during the battle, we’ll be able to completely destroy those dishonorable Sea Demons!”

The old king appeared to be caught in a difficult choice and asked, “Princes, what do you think?”

Theodore then said, “Actually... General Les’ suggestion isn’t without reason. It’s true, we can use our advantage on land to deal a severe blow to the Sea Demon army. That way, the empire won’t suffer as many losses. This will demonstrate Father’s benevolence!”

The Marquis’ scoffed as his arm continued to bleed.

The old king immediately noticed, “Marquis, did you have something you wanted to say?”

The Marquis stood up and said, “Your majesty, there was a time when we made a promise to not give up on a single inch of the empire’s territory. But now, you want us to give up five kilometers to the Sea Demons? Your Majesty, you should know that there are several villages all along the coast. The Pear Flower Fort holds a hundred thousand troops! If we live, all of them will be killed by the Sea Demon Tribe!”

Theodore coldly laughed, “We can send out troops to protect the civilians as they retreat and then send a messenger to order the Pear Flower Fort to retreat. That is all well within the time frame that we have.”

The Marquis was anxious and said, “Your Majesty, when the empire was first founded, we first drew our territory along the Sea of No Return. We absolutely cannot desert our founder’s land and give it to the Sea Demons and Hybrid Demons for nothing!”

A sliver of contempt appeared in Theodore's eyes, "It looks like after he lost his hand, the Marquis can no longer maintain his heroic stance. Is it possible that you've lost your courage to battle Luo Lin and Han Lin?"

The Marquis didn't respond. He knew that publicly contradicting Theodore was not a good thing for him. The old king's body was slowly deteriorating. One day, when he left this earth, Theodore was likely to be his heir. Theodore would not give the Marquis an easy time if that were to happen.

King Rob stood up with the Ruler's Sword in hand, "Seeing as nobody is opposed to it, then we will retreat five kilometers and then meet the enemy head on, isn't that right?"

I pursed my lips and shrugged.

"General Li Xiao Yao, do you have something to say?" King Rob looked over at me.

I looked up at the king and said, "Your Majesty, I am also opposed to pushing back our frontlines."

"Why's that?" The old king was puzzled.

Theodore let out another cold laugh, "I believe it's the same reason as the Marquis', and his courage has been shot by the Hybrid Demons? What Royal Army Commander, in the end you're all just gutless wimps!"

I smiled and slowly drew out my words, "I don't support pulling back the lines because we've already spent a long period of time constructing our formations on the beach, and they've finally somewhat solidified. We shouldn't give up on them so easily. More importantly, if we retreat and the Sea Demons don't end up following behind us, but rather Luo Lin, Ignaus, and Lanais are the ones to fight us on land, then it'll be the same as letting them go right around the Ice Ridge Mountains and bringing the Hybrid Demons straight into our territory. I do not believe that Tian Ling City currently has the strength to stand against the armies of three Hybrid Demon Kings."

The old king's expressions changed noticeably and alarm flashed across

his face. He sat back down and said, “No more discussions. We’ll use Pearl’s strategy and push out the Crossbow Carts, killing the Sea Demons on level ground. We’ll shoot down however many come after us! Also, send a messenger to Moon City in the desert requesting help. I hope that delusional old duke will remember how we once helped his kingdom and send some troops as reinforcements.”

Of course, I didn’t hold much hope for reinforcements from Moon City. After all, The Sea of No Return touched the borders of all seven kingdoms. Who knew, maybe even Moon City was facing an attack from the Sea Demon Tribe. If that were the case, they wouldn’t have the ability to come help Tian Ling City.

Theodore angrily stood up and said, “Father, don’t be swayed by these people. We can bring out the Crossbow Carts to fight against the Sea Demons, but the carts are too heavy. Once we lose, all of the crossbow carts will be destroyed. How is that any good to us?”

Pearl smiled, “Brother, don’t worry about that. If we really can’t hold off the Sea Demon attack, then the entire empire would be finished. Why should we worry about losing a couple of Crossbow Carts?”

Theodore was silenced by his sister’s words. All he could do was glare straight at me. I smiled back and left the camp. I jumped back onto my horse and went straight back to the Royal Army Camp.

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“Pa...pa...pa...”

The battle horse stepped out onto the soft sand. Most of the bodies that lay before the Tian Ling Camp either disappeared or were taken away. Right now, everything was cleared out. All that was left was the chaos that the fishmen had left on the sands. Slashes crisscrossed the sand. Seeing it made a shiver run through my body. In the distance, several heads rose above the ocean’s surface. Hundreds, thousands...they were countless. I could feel the hairs rising up on my arms. The Sea Walrus Cavalry were launching their attack. These Sea Demons spent most of their lives under water, and yet they were still able to create a flag. The clammy flag rose

out of the water. It was too damp to wave in the winds. It was almost a little comical the way it clung to the flag pole.

By the time I reached the Zhan Long Camp, Li Mu, Wang Jian, Old K, and Qing Qian had already set up the formations. Seeing me return, Li Mu asked, “Xiao Yao, how are the NPC higher-ups?”

I smiled, “Same as usual. The Tian Ling King has decided to stake it all in this fight and take the Sea Demons head on. This time, we players need to put in everything we’ve got too, otherwise the Sea Demons will truly sweep through Tian Ling City. At that point, we’ll have no choice but to becoming roaming mercenaries.”

Li Mu nodded, “Yup, don’t worry, we shouldn’t fall to that point. These Sea Demons aren’t that strong. But each wave of fish men gives a lot of experience. Just from that last wave, I rose two whole levels! I’m a lot closer to the big 150!”

I looked at my own level, 145. I was five levels from the sixth class advancement at level 150. After this Battle of the Sea of No Return, that should be around enough. Never would I have thought that I would be able to advance so smoothly. Before, achieving Level 150 seemed to be eons away!

Wang Jian pulled out his blade and pointed it at the Sea Walrus Cavalry on the horizon, “Prepare for battle!”

I nodded, “Everyone work hard. I’m heading over to the Royal Army! Wan Er, you, Qing Qian, and Li Mu take the lead!”

My girlfriend smiled back, “Don’t worry, [Zhan Long] will be able to stand against this wave of attacks.”

“Yes!”

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I turned around and went straight to the Royal Army Camp. I shouted, “Long Xing Xia Ye, bring out all of the Crossbow Carts in the Royal Army and set them before the Blade and Shield Camp. When the Walrus Cavalry charges at us, let’s make sure we give them a warm welcome!”

“Yes, Sir!”

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie all rushed over to greet me. Not long after, the large Crossbow Carts were brought out. The body of each Crossbow Cart was made of steel. I couldn't tell what material the string was made of, but each one had around twenty different strings. All of the strings were turning at the same time and were operated by ten people at once. With each shot, over twenty arrows flew out. No wonder Theodore and the others placed so much importance on them; they were truly powerful!

Under the Crossbow Carts were four wheels, and each cart was pulled by several horses. It moved incredibly slowly over the sand. Theodore was not unnecessarily worried. Once we lost the battle, those Crossbow Carts would fall into the Hybrid Demon hands.

The Royal Army wasn't originally a major unit in the empire, but after I joined and we won victory after victory, we were finally awarded a couple of these heavy machines. The Empire gave us fifty carts, which was now the biggest card in our deck.

“Blade Shield Camp, protect the Carts!” Long Xing shouted.

I squinted at the distance and said, “Careful, they're coming at us now!”

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Not long afterwards, the ugly Sea Walrus Cavalry stepped onto the shores. Their feet were soft and had no hooves. Despite that, they looked extremely strong. I could see scores of fishmen sitting on their backs. The Fishmen carried spears in their hands and a longbow on their backs. The Sea Demons were actually familiar with riding and archery.

Chapter 786: The Zero Mile Gazebo

[Sea Walrus Knights] (Hybrid Demon Monsters)

Level: 150

Attack: 16000-18200

Defense: 12000

Health: 800,000

Skills: [Assault] [Aquamarine Surge] [Shot of Apollo]

Introduction: Sea Walrus Cavalry. The sea walrus were originally gentle creatures from the Sea of No Return. However, once they were tamed by the Fishmen, they became their mounts. The Fishmen were experts in the art of taming, and they were capable of smithing extraordinary weapons. Armed with a spear, these Fishmen soon became tyrants of the sea. They utilized their agility in both water and on land to invade and conquer other tribes.

.....

Looking at the stats for the Sea Walrus Knights, I couldn't help but take a deep breath. These stats were on par with a BOSS!

I rode my horse over to the Royal Army and [Zhan Long] members and did my best to attend to both equally. I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and roared, "Prepare for battle! Steel Bladed Horsemen in the front, hold your positions. Ranged players in the back, release everything in your arsenal. These Sea Walrus Knights only have around 800,000 health. Killing them will not be that difficult!"

Everyone nodded in acknowledgement. All eyes were glued onto the oncoming Sea Walrus Knights.

Right at that moment, I heard Long Xing from the Royal Army roar, "Aim, and fire!"

Over fifty crossbows let out a thunderous twang. One after another,

heavy dark arrows flew out into the air like rain. In the distance, the Sea Walrus Knights couldn't defend in time and were immediately bloodied by the attack. The Crossbow Carts were made of high quality materials by expert smiths. I could just imagine the explosive power that they contained. The steel arrows could practically pierce through an entire Sea Walrus. The damage numbers flew into the air, shocking everyone—

“126,372!”

“123,319!”

“131,247!”

.....

Li Mu widened his eyes and gasped lightly, “F*ck, what’s up with that power? They actually managed to bring out six digits in damage. What the f*ck, aren’t those crossbows just too incredible? If one day we decided to fight the NPCs and they produced a weapon like this, wouldn’t that be the same as committing suicide?”

I smiled, “Well, what else would it be? Of course, we will face them one way or another in the future. At that point, everyone's just going to have to defend with their lives. Perhaps some may be able to survive with some Invincibility or [Dou Qi Armor] skills...”

Li My choked, “Nevermind, I don't want to think about it anymore. Let's just deal with these Sea Walrus Knights first!”

After the crossbows completed their first round of attacks, the end result was a beach littered with the corpses of Sea Walruses. Blood dyed the foamy tide red. But, just as before, the Sea Walrus continued their charge. They barked as they crawled into shore, the sound very similar to a cow. Their strength was much stronger than that of a cow, however, and they didn't move slowly at all.

Long Xing raised his sword and shouted, “Hurry and prepare the next round!”

Beside every crossbow cart was a group of five knights rushing to pull back the strings while another five were loading the arrows into place. The entire process took around 30 seconds to complete before they let loose another round of attacks. However, this time the Sea Walrus Knights were already within 200 yards of us. While the Crossbows Carts were quickly prepared, it seemed that no matter what, we couldn't solely rely on them to fend off the wave of Hybrid Demons.

“They're here!”

Old K roared and gripped his axe tightly. As he looked into the distance, it was hard for me to tell if he was nervous or excited. But, it didn't seem to be fear. That b*st*rd had never shown fear. Anyways, the worst possible outcome was death, and it wasn't like he hadn't died before.

.....

One enormous Sea Walrus Knight screeched and charged forward. I raised both my Zhen Yue Blade and my Dragon Reservoir Sword and dashed towards them. I immediately threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash]+[Sword Tempest]. I then followed the attack with a [Halberd Flame]. I charged into the crowd by myself. After all, I was the only one who would dare to take on such a feat in all of [Zhan Long].

Peng peng peng...

The Sea Walrus Knights closest to our shield formation had already activated their skills. The seawater around us rose up in raging waves. Once they rammed against our shield wall, they would continuously push against the Steel Bladed Horsemen. Even with our defense, they managed to push our wall back ten yards. That must be the effect of [Aquamarine Surge]. If this kept up, we wouldn't be able to hold our ground!

I quickly threw out my Zhen Yue Blade and activated my [Blade Spin] in front of the Sea Walrus Knights. I then shouted, “Li Mu, have your people push the formation forward!”

Li Mu nodded. He swung his blade in one hand while grabbing his reins in the other and forced his way forward with the might of the Steel Blade Mount. Peng peng peng! He pushed the Sea Walrus Knights back. The rest

of the Steel Blade Knights followed suit. Clearly the strength of the Steel Bladed Horsemen was one of a kind, they were actually able to push the Sea Walruses back ten yards in one surge.

But right as everyone felt a spurt of celebration leap in their hearts, one of the Sea Walrus Knights raised the longbow in his hands. A fiery red arrow formed on the string. Pa! He released it into the crowd of people. One of the critically injured Steel Blade Horsemen was caught completely off guard and was instantly killed. Furthermore, that one arrow passed through his body and dealt damage to all players in its 30 yard path. One of the healers who wasn't protected had also been killed!

"G*dd*mn!" Old K flipped his battle axe and shouted, "Healers, be careful while you're healing!"

I felt a shudder run through my heart as well. I immediately increased my attack speed, so that I could attract more of the Sea Walrus Knights towards me. That [Shot of Apollo] skill was just too fierce. It was on a whole other level compared to the player's attacks. To top it off, it created a dizzying effect.

And so, rays of red light flashed throughout the battlefield as [Shot of Apollo] was released into the crowd of players. At the same time, the players continued to cut down the Sea Walrus Knights, killing them in twos and threes. The battle was starting to devolve into one of attrition.

.....

On the other side, the Royal Army's formation didn't seem to be much better off. Even though they had the help of the Crossbow Carts, the Sea Walrus Knights were still pushing towards the frontlines at a frightening speed. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie led squads of horsemen into battle, followed by the foot soldiers. They used their shields to block the force of the [Aquamarine Surge]. They would then cut at the horse's legs. Wait, that's not right, it would be better described as the flippers of the Sea Walrus.

Pu!

One [Shot of Apollo] flashed by, and two Royal Army soldiers immediately fell off their horses as a bloody hole opened up in their

chests. Following that, a Sea Walrus would charge forward. The Fishmen Knight would swing his blade, ka cha ka cha!, and like that, sent the heads of the two Royal Army soldiers flying into the air.

“Ah....”

One young soldier, who looked to be around twenty or so years old, immediately paled when he saw the scene before him. His two legs shook under him and he knelt to the ground, “How? How did it become like this?”

Not far from the boy, Han Yuan shouted, “Tang Lin, get your *ss up! Are you trying to die?”

Before he even finished his words, a Sea Walrus dashed past and stabbed his spear through Tang Lin’s chest. He then threw him into the air, sending him crashing onto one of the Crossbow Carts.

Han Yuan narrowed his eyes, “F*ck!”

I let out a deep sigh. This was battle, if you weren’t a strong player in this game, then your only fate was to be killed. Crying wasn’t going to save you.

.....

The battle continued endlessly. Light bounced off of blades and blood splattered the ground. The Steel Blade Horsemen held off the barrage of Sea Walrus attacks time and time again. Thankfully, our mages, archers, and musketeers were impressive. Rays of [Lightning Eagle Formation] and [Magma Lance] exploded among the crowd of enemies, giving the Sea Walruses a hard time. While these Hybrid Demons were fairly scary monsters for the NPC armies, in the eyes of players, especially top level ones, they were nothing but extra experience, equipment, and gold.

Of course, there was also the extra achievement points!

The battle reached its climax. Sea Walruses still continued to appear on the surface. Additionally some enormous fish-like creatures were also appearing. They were Level 7 Hybrid Demons with long tentacles that grabbed and swallowed soldiers. Despite their ferocity, there was a limited

number of them and they were an easy target for the crossbows. Over half were killed before they even reached the shore. By the time they reached the soldiers, they were covered in arrows.

Despite these victories, the Sea Walrus attacks were just too fierce and many of the empire's soldiers died in battle.

“Ah....”

A wail sounded from the distance. One of the officer-level soldiers raised his blade as he rode his horse. Two arrows were stuck in his arm and he was covered in blood. Disappointment and fear penetrated his eyes. He ran over from the western side of the formation and shouted, “It's over... we're done for... the Harvest Army was slaughtered Four thousand soldiers, gone. Not one survivor. My... my fallen brothers....”

Right as he was talking, a red arrow pierced through the air from a distance!

Pu!

The arrow struck the commander right in the mouth and flew through his head. Xia Lei grunted and fell off his horse. The Fishman that shot him ran forward and cut off his head. Glancing at Xia Lei's body, Han Yuan clenched his teeth and said, “Commander Xia Lei, I hope that you rest in peace!”

.....

There were only so many armies in the empire. In the end, during this battle, one entire army was demolished...

Over where the Flame Dragon and Xia Yu Army were, there was a large amount of fiery light. It seemed they were using cannons. After all, that was where the royal flag resided. It was also where the Hybrid Demon Army concentrated most of its attacks. The pressure must have been extremely intense over there. Even though they were two of the empire's trump cards, they were still having a hard time.

On the other side, I heard a thunderous sound. I looked over and furrowed my brow. “What's happening over there?”

Han Yuan replied, "It's the empire's number one Magic teacher, Paladin. He's the instructor of Princess Pearl. He's the vice commander of the third greatest army in the empire, Winds of Battle. What you're hearing right now is the effect of his spell."

I was puzzled, "Winds of Battle?"

Han Yuan nodded, "Yes sir. Princess Pearl commands two armies; one is our Royal Army, while the other is the Winds of Battle, with 80,000 men. The commander of the Winds of Battle is her highness Pearl, while the vice commander is Lord Paladin. Based on my estimates, there's no way the Winds of Battle will be able to maintain their numbers!"

I couldn't help but smile out of spite, "After this battle, who will really be able to maintain their initial numbers...?"

Han Yuan smiled back, "It's okay, Lord Commander, we all understand the consequences. When it comes to killing enemies, the Royal Army would rather all die than become someone else's joke!"

Chapter 787: A Bitter Struggle With No End

Panicked horses dashed around the beach shores. I led Matcha, Wang Jian, and the other Steel Blade Horsemen in a charge against the Sea Walrus Knights. I had long lost count of the number of monsters that my Dragon Reservoir Sword and Zhen Yue Blade had cut down. Fresh blood covered my entire body. Throughout this long battle, my Hidden Dragon armor collected dents and slashes, until almost every inch was covered. My Ruler's Cape was even more tattered and stained with blood.

.....

“Ka Cha!”

I swept my blade forward, splitting the head of one of the Sea Walrus Knights. He cried out and fell to the ground. His body jerked a few times before he slumped over and dropped a steel spear. I tossed the spear over to one of the Steel Blade Horsemen and he looked over at me, “How long have we been killing these Sea Walrus Knights? It feels like a lifetime has passed...”

I nodded, “A whole six hours!”

Qing Qian cleaned off her bloody dagger as she walked over and said, “Brother Xiao Yao, [Zhan Long] is taking enormous losses. We only have 10,000 men left. I don't think your Royal Army is any better off, either...”

I couldn't help but feel my heart tighten as she said that. I had practically watched this Royal Army grow from the bottom up. They'd taken far too many losses in this battle. It couldn't be helped that I would feel for them.

Wan Er glanced across the horizon as she blocked the sun out with her Iron Umbrella, “Just how many more Sea Demons are there in the Sea of No Return? Logically speaking, over twenty thousand should have died on the shores. There shouldn't be too many more, right?”

I walked over and gave her a hug and smiled, “Wan Er, you've worked

hard. Looks like you've hit sixth place in terms of achievement points!"

Wan Er grinned, "I couldn't have done it without [Zhan Long] holding off the Sea Walrus charge... That's right, [Wrath of Heroes], [Thousand Burial], [Valley of the Gods] and several other small guilds were all but decimated within three hours. They've taken quite a few losses..."

I hadn't paid much attention to the situation with the other guilds, but I never would've imagined the losses to be so great. I furrowed my brow and said, "It's actually turned into this..."

Wei Liang picked up an equipment drop from the ground and blinked a few times, "[Thousand Burial] is a guild that holds 30,000 Greedy Wolf Raiders, and yet even they weren't able to stand against the Sea Walrus Knights. How strange..."

Wan Er wryly smiled, "Not particularly. The Greedy Wolf Raiders are heavily reliant on their attack power and their speed. Their defense, on the other hand, was far lacking compared to the Steel Bladed Horsemen. On top of that, [Thousand Burial]'s player turnover was just too high. There were good and bad players mixed in, so their teamwork was not up to standard. On top of that, they took up an enormous amount of space next to the Harvest Army, making their density too low. It was only natural that their defenses should fall."

Li Mu replied, "Nevermind, either way, we managed to make it through this wave of Hybrid Demons!"

I nodded, "Yup. Wan Er, you take charge of preparing the defenses. I'm going to head over to the Royal Army and take a look!"

"Got it!~"

.....

With my bloody swords in hand, I rode over to the Royal Army formation. All along the way I could see the injured soldiers crying out in pain. Han Yuan, Long Xing, Xia Ye, and Xiao Lie all had solemn expressions. When they saw me, they each paid their respects. "Commander!"

I nodded in acknowledgement and slid off my horse, “How’s the situation?”

Han Yuan’s eyes were red, “I led eight thousand new troops, and after that fighting, only four thousand are left... There are two thousand survivors from the Blade Shield Camp and the Cavalry. After that last battle, we took heavy losses. Around seven thousand of our men have died, and another nine thousand are injured. We have less than ten thousand who can still fight. And that’s an optimistic estimate that includes the lightly injured soldiers.”

I took a deep breath and put my hand on Han Yuan’s shoulder, “Have Ming Fu escort the injured soldiers back to Tian Ling City for medical care. The rest will stay and continue on to the next battle. The Hybrid Demon Army will not let us off easily. Now that the Empire’s armies have taken such a big hit, they will definitely launch another attack.”

I could see a sliver of despair in Han Yuan’s eyes, “General, are we all really going to die here? The Sea of No Return is a cursed land. We... if we die here, will our country actually fall into enemy hands?”

I clenched my teeth, “Don’t worry. We still have the adventurers helping us fight. The empire will not fall into the hands of the Hybrid Demons. While our damage is great, the Sea Demons have suffered far more. Do not forget, their armies have been practically annihilated. Besides, there’s a limit to the number of soldiers that the Revered One can bring on those boats. I refuse to believe that Luo Lin was able to save a lot of his ships from the attack we inflicted on him at the beginning.”

A ray of hope appeared in Han Yuan’s expression. Not only him, even Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xiao Ye’s faces showed a little more hope. It seemed that my words had raised their morale somewhat and gave everyone a little bit of hope. Yup, it was much more important for me to give them hope than anything else in a situation like this.

Right then, a messenger raced over and shouted from a distance, “Is the commander general of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao, are you still alive? If so, please report back to the Center Tent for a military meeting!”

Han Yuan jerked his horse over and said, “You f*cker, what did you say? Would our commander die so easily? Haha, our general is talented in both strength and brains. He won’t die in a battle like this!”

The messenger was stunned. He gave Han Yuan a strange glance, as though he thought he were crazy. But, Han Yuan was ranked well above the messenger, so he didn’t dare say anything else. I, on the other hand, felt some emotions well up in my throat. It looked like Han Yuan really thought of me as a brother. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have gotten so worked up by a small thing like this.

.....

I leaped back onto my horse and put Han Yuan and Xiao Lie in charge of preparations. I then galloped towards the Center Tent. As I passed over the shore, I could see the consequences of the battle on the army. It was no exaggeration to call it hell on earth. Corpses were scattered everywhere, and this was just the tip of the iceberg. I would only find out about the real consequences when I reached the Center Tent.

I walked straight into the tent. When Princess Pearl saw me, I could see relief in her eyes. However, it only lasted for a single moment. It looked like the princess didn’t wish for me to die in this battle?

As I stood on the snow-white rug of the Center Tent, I left behind a pinkish footprint. I had killed far too many Fishmen, soaking all of my gear with blood. It even dripped down my armor and sword scabbards. There was no time to clean up. All I could do was use the edges of my cloak to quickly wipe some of it off.

Right then, one of the guards furrowed his brow in disgust and said, “General Li, why didn’t you clean off the blood before entering the tent? You’ve dirtied the royal tent, do you understand the grave crime you’ve committed?”

I looked up and smiled, “My apologies, I was in too much of a hurry. I haven’t had the time to carefully clean up my clothing.”

Pearl coldly smiled, “Guard Qing, shut your mouth. Otherwise, you can go out and fight the Hybrid Demons. At a time like this, you’re actually

focusing on such mindless ceremonies. Should I criticize you for not being sensible, or too soft?”

The guard was speechless after the princess’ words. King Rob didn’t seem to mind their interaction. But he must be giving his silent approval of the princess’ words. After all, Pearl was in charge of the Winds of Battle Army and the Royal Army. She was basically the third most reputed person in the empire. The king still needed his daughter to support him in his conquest of the land. How could he possibly make her at fault?

Not long after, the other generals all filed into the tent. The Marquis of the Flame Axe Army was among them, even though there were few soldiers left alive. I was afraid he hadn’t lent much help in this last battle. I did a quick head count and found that there were three people missing.

The Marquis eyes were sorrowful and he fell to his knees, “Your majesty, the Harvest Army and General Xia Lian have all died in battle. The West Liang Army has lost over ninety percent of their soldiers, and Commander Liang Xiao killed himself when he was surrounded in battle. The Hai Qin Army has lost eighty percent of their soldiers, and their Commander Wang Lu had died in battle. That’s three armies, all gone, all gone...”

King Rob shuddered, “Commander Xia Lian, Commander Liang Xiao and Commander Wang Lu are all dead?”

Theodore clenched his teeth, “Father, the three commanders died for their country. They should be made into martyrs for our country. I will go out and bring their bodies back so that they may be given a proper and honorable burial!”

The old king closed his eyes in sorrow and said, “Go on and prepare them.”

Owen then said, “Father, we should prioritize planning for the next battle. This time, over 500,000 Sea Walrus Knights have died on our shores. The Sea Demons will not give up after this. I’m afraid that they’ll bring out their true forces in the next attack. Maybe, that old demon Han Ling will personally lead the charge. When that time comes, our real nightmare will begin! I still have a hundred thousand men from my Xia Yu

Army left, we still have the strength to fight. Father, don't worry too much."

The old king looked over at the older prince, "Theodore, how's the situation with the Flame Dragon Army?"

Theodore's face became solemn, "Father, the Flame Dragon Army was under the heaviest fire when the Sea Walrus Knights invaded, and so we've taken enormous losses. Even so, we still have ninety thousand men left to fight!"

King Rob took a deep breath, "Pearl, what about your army?"

Pearl replied, "The Winds of Battle still has sixty thousand men left."

"The Royal Army?" The King seemed to care quite a bit about our army.

Pearl looked over at me, "Li Xiao Yao, how about you personally respond to Father?"

I nodded and stepped forward, "Your majesty, the Royal Army has taken heavy losses and only has ten thousand men left to fight."

"What!" The King was stunned, "The Royal Army originally had close to thirty thousand men, and now there's only ten thousand left..."

Theodore couldn't help but coldly smile, "As I thought, just a bunch of trash!"

Pearl was enraged, "Big brother, do not speak of the Royal Army like that. Where is Long Xiang General? He's in charge of reporting the statistics. How about you come out and say how the Royal Army compares with the Flame Dragon Army?"

One man clothed in red armor stepped out from the crowd and knelt to the ground, "Reporting to His Majesty. Based on what I have found, the Flame Dragon Army lost a hundred and forty thousand men in battle, and have fifty thousand injured. In total, they killed a hundred and seventy thousand Hybrid Demons. The Royal Army lost a total of twenty eight thousand men, with eleven thousand injured and have killed one hundred and fourteen thousand demons!"

The tent went silent. No one would have imagined that with a mere thirty thousand men, the Royal Army was actually able to kill multitudes more of its enemies. Of course, much of our success could be attributed to the help of [Zhan Long]'s Steel Blade Horsemen for holding off the charge. Furthermore, the fifty crossbows that we had used gave us enormous firepower. Otherwise, the Royal Army would never have been able to kill so many Hybrid Demons.

.....

Surprise and shock flashed across the king's face. He thought for a moment and said, "For this next battle, all armies with less than ten thousand men disperse and join the Royal Army with Li Xiao Yao as the acting commander. With that, the Royal Army will have over 50,000 men!"

Pearl jumped with glee, "Thank you, father!"

She tugged on my arm and I followed suit, "Thank you, Your Majesty!"

Chapter 788: The Yasha Army

The old king had allowed fifty thousand men to join the Royal Army. That was indeed a good thing. However, I was more worried about what would happen if the Sea Demon Army chose to continue its attack. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to save many of my soldiers from the surviving seventeen thousand that were left. If all I had was an empty army, then all of my efforts would have been for nothing.

Plus, quite a few of the soldiers and officers in the Royal Army had gained levels because of this battle. Some of them had even risen to a new tier. Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and Xia Ye all rose up to become Divine Tier BOSSes. There was no way to ignore the fact that during a battle, these NPCs were our greatest assets. I could not lose them in the next sector. Fifty thousand soldiers would never substitute the value of these brave generals.

.....

I looked into the distant horizon. I could see the distant figure of the Sea Demon King Han Lin. He wasn't attacking, but it didn't look like he planned on leaving. It left an unsettling feeling in our stomachs.

The Hybrid Demon Army had attacked the empire's army for over fourteen hours. Logically speaking, this wave of attacks should be the real attack. Even though the Tian Ling City Armies had taken enormous losses, the strength of the players was still fairly high. [Legend], [Hero's Mound], and [Judgement] had conserved most of their strength.

“Wu wu wu wu...”

The unmistakable sound of a horn echoed across the sea. Princess Pearl stiffened, “That... ? That's the sound of a conch shell! Heavens, is Han Lin launching the final strike?”

Owen stood up and slammed the desk, “All armies prepare. Do not be stingy with the arrows and cannons. Use all of the dragon crystals in our storage. Otherwise, Tian Ling City will be looking at a long, drawn-out war!”

Owen stood up and squinted into the distance, "It's the Sea Demon King's Deep Sea Imperial Guard. I heard that this branch was completely made up of Yasha from the deep sea. There's a total of two hundred thousand of them and are the trump card within the Sea Demon King's ranks. To top it off, this Deep Sea Imperial Guard is led by twelve incredibly strong generals. They're all lords of the sea. D*mm*t, we're about to meet some truly strong enemies!"

King Rob gripped his sword and in a solemn tone, he addressed us, "Warriors of Tian Ling City, prepare for battle. No matter how many men Han Lin brings, we must defeat him. We must make him pay the price for betraying our treaty!"

Everyone stood up to leave. Even Princess Pearl leapt onto her horse and began directing her generals to prepare for battle. I quickly left towards the Royal Army's camp. It looked like this would truly be the final battle. I could see the Sea Demon King's figure getting closer and closer to shore. If Han Lin was coming to battle himself, that only went to show that the Sea Demon Tribe of the Sea Of No Return was truly going all out this time.

.....

"Are they coming again?"

Han Yuan raised his sword and immediately jumped onto his horse, "Those f*cking sea f*ckers are finally going all out! Haha, it's the Yasha Army!"

Long Xing stiffened, "Yasha? Gods... You aren't talking about the legendary Deep Sea Imperial Army?"

Xiao Lie cackled, "That's the one! The legendary, most fearsome power in the Sea of No Return. How is it, General Long Xing, you wouldn't happen to be afraid now, would you? That's right, you were once a colonel in the Flame Dragon Army, you must be used to living like a prince. Why would you be willing to sacrifice your life for some plebeians like us Royal Army folks?"

Long Xing's expression turned ugly. Even so, he clenched his teeth and said, "General Xiao Lie, even though I was once a soldier of the Flame

Dragon Army... I know what it means to be loyal to my country, and I know what it means to watch over your own. I have never once forgotten the trust and respect that Commander Li Xiao Yao has given to me. I want to let you know that from this point forth, I am a general of the Royal Army. Even if I were to die, the insignia of the Royal Army would be inscribed upon my grave!"

Han Yuan grinned, "Your words surpass the promise of a thousand troops! Good! No matter how terrifying the Deep Sea Imperial Army is, we'll retreat and advance into battle together. Even if it means death, at least we'll know that we were once brothers in this life!"

A heroic expression washed over Long Xing's face. He raised his spear with a smile, "Alright, it has been an honor to fight alongside generals Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and Xiao Ye. I have no regrets in this life, even if I were to die in battle today!"

I could see the brotherhood that was forming between these men. Their optimism and loyalty brought up the morale of the entire army. All of the barbarians in the Blade Shield camp raised their blades and banged them against their shields as they roared in agreement. Right as our spirits were high, a mass of human heads emerged from the sea. Upon closer examination though, they didn't look much like human heads at all. Most of them had extremely fierce expressions. Their mouths were more similar to a fish or some kind of beast. Some had faces covered with scales, while others had spikes. There were even some who had a long, spiny tail. All of them looked extremely fearsome.

.....

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and sprinted across the Royal Army's camp. When I arrived at the [Zhan Long] camp, I saw that Wan Er had already finished reorganizing the formation. We had lost over half of our Steel Blade Horsemen in the last battle. Yet there were still over three thousand of them left. These horsemen made up the entire frontline. Furthermore, they had shrunk the width of the formation so that the pressure wouldn't be quite as heavy. Just right of [Zhan Long] was [Hero's Mound], [Prague], and [Enemies at the Gate]. After all, this part was going

to take the heaviest fire, so there would have to be enough players to stand against that pressure.

Li Mu looked into the distance and said, "The Yasha are coming. These NPC soldiers look like they're about to pee themselves, haha..."

I was dumbfounded by his carefreeness, "Let's not underestimate the enemy. There must be a reason for the NPCs to be this nervous. After all, an army of monsters named the Deep Sea Imperial Army cannot be an easy enemy to defeat. I just can't figure out why..."

Wan Er suddenly appeared beside me. I don't know when she learned [Unrivalled Spirit], but she smiled mischievously at me, knowing she gave me a jump when she appeared like that. "What can't you figure out?"

Unphased, I continued, "The Sea Demon Tribe has allied themselves with the Hybrid Demon Army. Just in this single battle, they've used up a million of their troops. That's probably most of their numbers. Just what is the Sea Demon King Han Lin trying to achieve here? On the other hand, the Hybrid Demon Army only used Luo Ling, the one king. Plus, the Revered One's warriors have all been killed already. Clearly they're giving the Sea Demon King the short end of the stick, turning his soldiers into cannon fodder."

Wan Er bit her lip and said, "Even the Hybrid Demons are playing politics with each other?"

I shook my head, "Who knows...?"

Li Mu chuckled, "Guildmaster, haven't you noticed that the Hybrid Demon Kings have been appearing one at a time, but in all this time, we haven't met the number one king? Wouldn't that be the real King of the Hybrid Demons? I'm thinking that in order for Han Lin to put so much on the line, it must have something to do with that Hybrid Demon Emperor, isn't that right?"

I nodded, "Yea, that would make sense. No matter, let's just hold off these Yasha first!"

"Okay!"

.....

After a few minutes, we heard the conch shell echo throughout the battlefield once again. The Yasha army on the horizon was starting to move again. I could hear their yells as they rushed onto the shore. Waves rose up in enormous walls of water and crashed against the embankment. Some were even five meters tall! This was truly a sight that we had not been expecting. The waves flooded into our formations!

“Hold your positions!”

I pierced my Dragon Reservoir Sword into the sand, anchoring myself to the spot so that I wouldn't be pushed back by the waves. As I shouted commands, all of the [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen and the Royal Army's Blade and Shield Camp prepared their defenses and stood their ground. In the next moment, everyone was submerged in seawater. Even while we had made our preparations, I could see that quite a few had been swept away to the back. Once everyone opened their eyes and the water had cleared, the Yasha were less than a hundred yards away from us!

“D*mm*t!”

From the back of the Royal Army, Long Xing shouted, “The sea water has soaked through the dynamite. We can't use the cannons!”

Xiao Lie roared, “the Dragon Crystal Cannons! General Long Xing, use the Dragon Crystal Cannons and the Crossbow carts to attack!”

“Alright!”

Right then, an explosive sound rocked the grounds and cannons let loose one after another. It was like miniature surges. The Yasha that the cannons hit were immediately blown to smithereens. The Crossbow Carts also continuously shot out arrows. Even so, it was clear that after the wave, there weren't enough people manning the machines.

“Keng!”

Matcha smashed her shield into the ground and shouted, “Ranged players, prepare to shoot. Archers, use [Scatter Shot]. Do whatever you can to mess up their rhythm. Steel Bladed Horsemen, prepare the cooldowns

for your [Holy Wall]!”

Not far from us, I could see that [Hero’s Mound], [Prague], and [Enemies at the Gate] were already engaged in battle. Q-Sword swung his sword as he led his horse around the border of the battlefield. He continued yelling orders at the soldiers fighting against the enemy. After a few seconds, the Yasha army suddenly pushed forward another block of distance. I could already see quite a few of their faces in clear detail.

The stats for the different Yasha were all pretty cool. I quickly read the biography of one of the monsters with a head shaped like a lobster.

[Deep Sea Yasha] (Level 6 Hybrid Demon)

Level: 153

Attack: 16700-18900

Defense: 15000

Health: 1,000,000

Skills: [Fierce Ice Blade] [Aquamarine Charge] [Aquamarine Break]

Introduction: Deep Sea Yasha, the strongest among the Deep Sea tribes. These Yasha not only have many capabilities in the water, they’re also able to walk on land. After a long period of time, under the teachings of the sea Demon King Han Lin, they learned to battle in sync with one another. These Yasha and their skills on land, sea, and in the air have made them into an undefeatable army in the Sea of No Return. In these past seven years, two hundred thousand troops swept through the Sea of No Return, wiping out each and every one of the main players who held power there. Like that, they boosted Han Lin up to the throne as King of the Seas.

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“Careful, it's a Level 6 Hybrid Demon!”

I gripped my Dragon Reservoir Sword and said, “The three skills are all attack skills, let’s focus on our defenses!”

Right as I finished my orders, the Yasha already advanced into our firing

range. [Zhan Long]'s archers, mages, and musketeers all began their attack. Arrows and magic flew at the crowd of monsters, bringing out numerous damage numbers. The Yasha, however, didn't seem to have an ounce of fear as they continued their quick pace forward. They screeched as they charged ahead, waving their swords and spears. They rammed right against the Steel Blade Horsemen's shields. [Aquamarine Charge] had pushed our frontlines back several meters. Just one of those fish-faced b*st*rds carried three blades. He swung his blade right at Matcha's Lion King Shield. All of the attacks were concentrated on one point. It was the [Aquamarine Surge]. Matcha was able to keep her stance against the attacks, but swordsmen on both sides of her cried out and fell to the ground. They had been killed at once by three of the [Aquamarine Surge] blows.

Chapter 789: The Twelve Generals

“F*ck!”

Li Mu ran over to fill in the gap. He raised his Neptune’s Blade and blocked the path of the Yasha crowd, “We can’t keep this up. That one charge they killed so many of our people. What do we do?”

Without a second word, Wan Er immediately activated her skill. Light rose off from her Wintry Clothes of a Minstrel. “Pop,” the sounds of bubbles wafted through the air. It was the [Heaven’s Lullaby] skill. The skill put all of the Yasha troops within a hundred yards of her to sleep. The effect lasted for seven seconds. This way, [Zhan Long] and the [Royal Army] would at least get a chance to recover for a moment. Everyone cast their skills and damage, quickly eliminating the first row of Yasha monsters.

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade and hacked away at all enemies in my path. Several times, my Zhen Yue Blade would cast a powerful stroke that would cut through everything within five yards of me, dealing 40% splash damage. Of course, with my attack power, it was incredibly painful to take that kind of damage. Very soon a space opened up around me, decreasing quite a bit of the pressure on [Zhan Long].

My Ancient Heavenly Tiger roared as it pounced into the crowd. The little tiger was a little frightened by these strange fish-shaped monsters, but after killing a few, it quickly gained confidence. It grew larger and threw a [Burstfire Raid] into the monster crowd. It had quite the stance as the King of Animals.

.....

I looked to the side and saw that the Blade Shield camp of the Royal Army had all raised their heavy shields under General Xiao Lie’s command. Like that, they were able to parry the [Aquamarine Surge] and [Aquamarine Break]. The horsemen all ducked behind the shields. They had the advantage of higher ground, and so they stabbed their spears through the Yasha. The archers always had their bows prepared to attack.

While the Yasha had a high attack power, it wasn't enough to completely overpower the heavy shields. Furthermore, those shields were at least five centimeters thick. Normal humans couldn't even pick them up. But its defense was extremely high.

Even so, quite a few of the barbarians in the Blade Shield camp had taken injuries. Han Yuan raised his spear to attack and shouted, "Medics, quickly tend to the injured! Any brothers who can still fight, raise your weapons. If you're injured, retreat. These Yasha b*st*rds are extremely fierce!"

The Royal Army people were fighting with all they had. There was even one soldier who had lost an arm, but continued hacking away at the enemy. But as usual, the Yasha only needed one attack to fell the soldier. Just in terms of individual battle power, the Yasha completely overpowered that of the Royal Army. The strategy with the highest probability of winning for the Royal Army was to not only attack with the Blade Shield Army and the Cavalry, but also have the crossbow carts, archers, and cannons throw a fire net over the enemy. Very soon, the Yasha discovered that the Royal Army was not easy to deal with.

Time passed by slowly. Before the blood on the sand had been swept away, new blood was already dripping onto the old. The bodies of the Yasha piled up on top of each other. The Royal Army wasn't much better off. The rate at which people were dying was only growing. [Zhan Long] was also losing a lot of players. Almost everyone had staked all of their strength in this battle.

In the blink of an eye, three hours passed. There was no way to count how many of the Yasha we had killed. All I knew was that [Zhan Long] had less than five thousand people left. We took heavy damage in this battle. Of course, those who had died would naturally get a pretty good reward after this battle was over, so they didn't lose out on too much, unless they had died the minute that they entered battle.

"Careful, someone's coming from the side!"

Qing Qian pointed to the north. All I could see was a man riding on a

green battle horse riding towards us. He was dressed in a deep blue armor and with each step, green ripples spread out in the sea. Clearly this was some kind of general. From a distance, I was able to see the general's stats and I copied it into the guild chat.

--

[Twelfth General Iron Scale] (Demon Harvest BOSS)

Level: 155

Attack: 18200-20500

Defense: 17000

Health: 5,000,000,000

Skills: [Steel Scales] [Surround Slash] [Tidal Strike] [Water God Possession]

Introduction: Iron Scale, one of the leaders among the Fishmen in the deep sea. Iron Scale is an evolved human. The scales on his body are extremely hard and can't be cut by blade or spear. Furthermore, he has trained in martial arts since he was a child, and has a stunning amount of experience. When he was only 17 years old, he was chosen to become a part of the Sea Demon King Han Ling's personal guard. When he was only 21, he became one of the strongest warriors in the Sea of No Return. Wielding his Wave Break Blade, he fought everyone in the sea and was undefeated. Soon after, he became one of the twelve generals. Both in political and military achievements, he is second only to the Sea Demon King himself. He is widely regarded as the most likely heir to the throne.

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"Scatter before your general!"

Iron Scale roared and slammed his blade against the shield of the Royal Army's Blade Shield line. "Ka Cha!" The entire shield split in two. The Break Wave Blade quickly cut into the barbarian standing behind the shield. He stood there, stunned, and slowly fell to his knees. Everything from his head to his shoulders had been sliced in half. Blood poured out

from the top half of his body.

“Ah...”

Han Yuang cried out. He was watching as the soldier died a gruesome death. It was rare to see something so gory occur. Iron Scale’s voice projected across the battlefield, scaring some of the rather cowardly soldiers out of their wits.

Iron Scale was right in the middle of the Royal Army soldiers. He was charging straight for the cavalry. He raised his Wave Break Blade and “Ka ka” cut down two of the horsemen. He then roared again, and his blade swept out in all directions, throwing slashes all around him. All of the horsemen who were near him cried out and fell. While Iron Scale was only a Demon Harvest Tier BOSS, he clearly had a lot of hidden skills. It looked almost as though he was completely dominating the Royal Army.

I was not far and felt my heart wrench with pain as I watched my soldiers die. I quickly yelled out, “Wan Er, Qing Qian, bring a group of people and follow me. We’ll go and kill that BOSS Iron Scale!”

A group of [Zhan Long] players lined up and followed behind me. A level 155 Demon Harvest BOSS. He was at the cusp of our limit as players.

I activated a [Charge] from a distance and locked onto Iron Scale. My Flying Scythe Horse whinnied and dashed forward in a flash. “Peng!” I rammed right into his back. I then raised both my Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Blade and dealt tree slashes. One after another, the damage numbers popped up. While Iron Scale had his [Steel Scale] effect up, his defense was truly terrifying. Even with my attack power, the damage was fairly light—

“11283 ! ”

“10299 ! ”

“11571 ! ”

I tried again. This time, I put all my energy into my Zhen Yue Blade and threw a [Wind Slash] right onto his neck—

“17362 ! ”

This time I finally hit a sore spot. Iron Scale roared and raised his Wave Break Blade, throwing a slash right onto my Hidden Dragon armor. When he saw the general badge at my waist, he coldly smiled, “So you’re the general of the Royal Army. Go die—[Tidal Slash]!”

It was the Tidal Slash skill! I felt a cold shudder through my chest, and in the next moment, a flame blossomed on my armor. You could say it was like a tide. “Peng!” I flew back from the impact and an enormous damage number popped up over my head. That Iron Scale’s attack power was just too terrifying. He was practically on par with a Demon King—

“38183 ! ”

Han Yuan and Long Xing both cried out, “Lord general!”

Matcha glanced at me, shock written across her face, “Thankfully it was boss that took that hit. If it was anyone else... I don’t even want to think about it!”

Li Mu and Wang Jian had already surrounded Iron Scale and dealt attacks from all four sides. I lead my horse forward and charged at the BOSS once again. Iron Scale roared and slashed at everyone. He then dealt another [Surround Slash]. Li Mu and Wang Jian all retreated, but even so, everyone lost over 50,000 health.

“Matcha!” Wan Er shouted.

Without a pause, Matcha marched forward and rammed against the BOSS. She then activated [Holy Provoke]. Iron Scale immediately changed his attacks to attack Matcha. With a cold laugh, he mocked, “You dare provoke me? You naive little brat!”

“Keng keng keng...”

His Break Wave Blade created sparks as it slashed against the Lion King Shield. From a distance, Darling Duck continued to feed Matcha [Heal]s. It was only like that, that she managed to take all of the hits. Dong Cheng, Dancing Forest, and Xing Lie all opened fire. Dancing Forest used her [Break Armor Shot] to lower his defenses. That way, Xing Lie and Li Mu

could break through his defense. Otherwise, with Iron Scale's defense stats, just one slash would only take one to two thousand damage. At that rate, when would they ever finish?

.....

The Royal Army all organized their formation. As the Yasha attacked them, they supported us with arrows. With the NPC working together, Iron Scale's health dropped much quicker. Within ten minutes, it was already getting to the bottom.

"The gods of the sea will never forgive you!" Iron Scale screeched at us. With his Break Wave Blade in hand, he looked up at the sky and shouted, "Water God, please give me your power. Lend me the strength to kill my enemies!"

A ray of light fell and the Water God Possession was complete. His health recovery increased by 400%, furthermore his attack power increased by 20%. In one [Surround Slash], Iron Scale instantly killed three Steel Blade Horsemen. Li Mu and Wang Jian both quickly retreated. The three Steel Blade Horsemen that had been killed were all wearing the Black Flame Armor, and yet they were still instantly killed. Who knew just how strong he had become!?

I quickly recast [Wall of Dou Qi] and [Frost Armor] on myself. I went forward to provoke the BOSS. Never would I have imagined that he would remember a Royal Army General like me. As such, he immediately counter attacked with another [Tidal Slash]!

"Peng!"

"71287 ! "

I flew back from the hit. I was nearly instantly killed in that one hit! Thankfully I was at full health...

I quickly gulped down a potion. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie were both distressed "B*st*rd, don't you dare make a move on our general!"

A group of Royal Army horsemen charged forward to attack. They threw slashes and stabs onto Iron Scale, but quite a few couldn't even break

through his defense. Rather, Iron Scale used a single sweep of his blade and cut seven of the Royal Army horsemen in half!

I was starting to get panicked, “Don’t stop your fire! We need to control the BOSS with our skills!”

As I said that, I used a [Beast Lock] on the BOSS from afar. Unfortunately it was a MISS. I clenched my teeth and used another special skill—[Grip of Purgatory]. “Hua!” It locked Iron Scale in his original position. Now, he could no longer move. Dong Cheng and Dancing Forest continued shooting their spells. I also threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash]+[Great Realm of Desolation]. I then also added an [Azure Dragon Crossbow]. It was only then that Iron Scale’s health finally began dropping again.

“D*mn*d cowards!”

Iron Scale roared and charged ahead with only 2% health. He hacked down two other Steel Blade Horsemen with his blade, only to be stunned by Dancing Forest’s [Scatter Shot]. I then cast another [Charge] and rammed against the BOSS. I quickly followed with a [Strength of a Thousand Men]. In between the attacks, the BOSS’ health finally emptied and a bell sounded through the battlefield—

“Ding!”

“System Announcement: Congratulations Player [Xiao Yao Zi Zai] for killing one of the Twelve Generals of the Deep Sea [Iron Scale]. You have received the following reward: Level+1, Charm+30, Achievements+200, Gold+40000!”

Chapter 790: The Twin Dragon Special Skill

I actually managed to get 200 achievement points in that one battle?

I was stunned. That reward was truly juicy. Wasn't it enough to bring me to first place in achievement points?

Unfortunately, the moment I opened up the Achievement Rankings, another bell sounded in the air. Once again, I fell to second place.

--

“Ding!”

System Notification: Congratulations [Fang Ge Que] has killed one of the Twelve Generals of the Sea of No Return. [Wang Xi] and has received the following reward, Level +1, Charm+30, Achievement+200, Gold+40000!

.....

A total of twelve Demon Harvest Tier BOSSes were supposed to appear in this wave. [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army dealt with one, while [Legend] killed another. However, the rest of the battlefield was in chaos. Most of the Yasha continued ravaging among the troops and we had no way of getting reliable information on what was happening at the other formations.

The second that Iron Scale had died, he dropped quite a bit of equipment. I galloped forward and picked up the three pieces and then displayed their stats for the [Zhan Long] players. One was a red helmet, one was a fiery dagger, and the other was a white cape. Qing Qian, Wan Er, and Li Mu all looked at me expectantly. Equipment dropped by a Demon Harvest BOSS, they must be pretty good, right?

I smiled, and pulled out the red helmet. I waved my hand in the air and the stats appeared. Just as I had expected, it was a Divine Tier equipment. While that was one tier lower than a Demon Harvest equipment, it was

still among the top levels of equipment in the game at this stage.

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[Iron Scale Helmet] (Divine Tier)

Type: Heavy

Defense: 1750

Strength: +140

Stamina: +138

Agility: +137

Magic: +134

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 20%

Additional: Increases the user's Max HP by 5000

Additional: Increases the user's critical hit chance by 11%. Stackable, up to 50%

Special Effect: [Steel Scale], Increases the user's Hidden Defense and Magic Defense by 70%

Required Level: 140

Required Charm: 200

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Raising the Steel Scale Helmet, I said, "Check out that Special Effect, it increases Hidden and Magic Defense. Some Demon Harvest equipment doesn't even match up with that. Let's go, the three people with the most damage and support come and ROLL. I don't need it, my Hero's Helmet is a bit stronger. Let's do this quick so we can get back to the battle!"

Everybody picked up the pace. Six people rolled at the same time, and in the end Wang Jian ended up with the helmet.

Next up was the second piece of equipment, which was the fiery dagger. The dagger's workmanship was exquisite and the flowers that were carved into its hilt were extremely elegant. I could see the faint glow of a fire

lighting up the etchings. I waved my hand over it and revealed the stats to everyone

.....

[Heavenly Flame] (Demon Harvest - Superior)

Attack: 4450-6100

Agility: +165

Stamina: +160

Magic: +157

Strength: +155

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 75%

Additional: Increases the user's attack speed by 120%

Additional: Ignores 355 of the target's defense

Special Effect: Flame Devour, While attacking a target, the skill transfers 15% of damage caused by the attack into the user's health

Special Effect: 3% chance of dealing 4x the damage to the target

Special: Demon Harvest Weapon 0012

Required Level: 140

Required Charm: 220

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I weighed the dagger in my hand and then smiled, "It's ranked twelfth among the Demon Harvest weapons. This dagger has to be among the strongest ones, right? Here here here, it's a dagger with an attack power that's even higher than my Dragon Reservoir Sword. How about we Roll?"

As I said that, I looked over at my beautiful girlfriend and smiled, "Wan Er, it's time you start praying for good luck. Otherwise, if you keep losing each time you ROLL... anyways, the three assassins with the most amount of damage, come and ROLL!"

The top three assassins were Wan Er, Qing Qian, and Wolf. One was my

girlfriend, one was my sister, and the other a brother. To be honest, it didn't matter who got it. Either way, it was a boost to [Zhan Long]'s strength.

But at the same time, this Heavenly Flame dagger's stats were just too great. It was a god weapon among assassins. Even if a swordsman, or a berserker were to wield it, they would deal terrifying damage. It felt a little bit wasteful in their hands, however. In an assassin's hands, the dagger's might would increase by over 50%. Plus, there was that 15% [Drain]. Normal weapons with high level damage didn't include a [Drain] effect. This [Heavenly Flame] had it, however. That was where this Demon Harvest weapon was truly superior.

"Pa pa pa" the three dice fell onto the ground and the numbers were revealed before us. I glanced over. Wan Er truly did not disappoint—

Wan Er: 91 points!

Qing Qian: 14 Points!

Wolf: 78 points!

.....

The Heavenly Flame dagger appeared in the beautiful vice guildmaster's hands. Wan Er immediately equipped it. With an Iron Umbrella in one hand and a Heavenly Flame dagger in the other, she was a truly impressive sight.

I finally tore my eyes from her hypnotic smile. If I continued looking, I wouldn't be able to stop myself from giving her a kiss in front of all these Royal Army soldiers. That wouldn't be good. After all, I just gave them a beating about not falling for the allures of women and wine. For the sake of the goal that Lin Tian Nan had given to me—dominating the world, I had to resist!

I picked out the final piece of equipment. It was a white cape. The cape itself didn't look very exquisite, you could even call it a little deteriorated. There were even signs of rust on the shoulders. There were clear signs of wear on the embroidered edges. As it fluttered in the wind, it looked as

though one edge was even tattered. But despite its appearance, it gave off a thick godly aura. I could feel it emanating from the threads when I reached out. I fell in love with it at the first glance. I had to get this cape!

[Violet Heaven Cape] (Demon Harvest)

Defense: 2400

Strength: +170

Stamina: +167

Agility: +165

Magic: +160

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 40% and attack speed by 25%

Additional: Increases the user's magic defense by 105%

Additional: Increases the user's Max HP by 8000

Special Effect: [Wind Stepper] Increases the user's movement speed by 60%

Special Effect: [Twin Dragon], When the user's health falls below 20%, the cape will automatically activate the [Twin Dragon] skill. Durability and defense is proportional to the user's attack power. Cooldown: 10 minutes

Special: Demon Harvest Weapon Number 0022

Required Level: 140

Required Charm: 200

.....

My eyes nearly rolled right out of their sockets as I stared at the Violet Heaven Cape's stats. I waved my hand over it and smiled, "Wow, this is the cape of a solo king..."

Li Mu rubbed his nose, "No matter how you look at it, it was practically tailor made... This cape can be equipped by any class, so everyone can use

it, alright? Let's go and ROLL for it!"

Wang Jian retorted, "Nah, we need to give Brother Xiao Yao at least a little bit of hope. Let's at least exclude anyone with less than 200 points in charm. Either way they wouldn't be able to use it!"

I chuckled and stabbed my Zhen Yue Blade into the ground, "No matter if we decide to ROLL for it or Roshambo, either way that cape is mine!"

Li Mu looked as though his nose was about to bleed from excitement, "Okay, then all warriors with a charm over 200 points ROLL! Little Dance, can you count out the number of people?"

Little Dance decided to join in on the fun, "There's 27 people!"

Wang Jian smiled, "Brother Xiao Yao, shall we ROLL? To be honest, you could be shameless and say that the cape will go to the person with the highest damage. If we do that, the beautiful Cang Yue would win it. She likes you so much that I'm sure she'll hand it right over to you. Of course, the prerequisite would be... Wu, well with her personality, she'll probably ask you to do a little something something..."

Wan Er was starting to panic. Her eyes widened at everyone and said, "Let's just ROLL..."

Wang Jian laughed, "When the Vice Guildmaster Wan Er gets jealous, it's indeed cute..."

Wan Er's face was flushed, "Just hurry up and ROLL, let's not waste anymore time..."

I nodded and put the cape over the horse's head and said, "I'll start. I'm thinking that the heavens have already decided that the cape is mine. Nobody will take it from me!"

One Second Hero replied, "Oh stop bluffing and just ROLL first!"

I threw out my dice. "Hua La La, it spun a few times. "Pa ta!" it stopped. Everyone gaped at the number—100 points. I actually rolled 100 points!

I clapped my hands and smiled, "Well, everyone else make the ROLL. If nobody gets a hundred points, then that Violet Heaven Cape will go to

me... ahahaha....”

Of course everybody else couldn't let my ego inflate like that and so they all ROLled. In the end, Dong Cheng had the highest with 97 points. There wasn't another person of the 27 who rolled a hundred. I draped the cape over my shoulders. I felt a shiver rise up in my spine. Not only did my stats greatly increase, I felt my confidence spike too. When my health dropped below 20%, the cape would automatically activate the [Twin Dragon] skill. Hehe, this self-preservation skill was truly a godsend!

I looked at my stats gain and saw that they increased significantly—

[Xiao Yao Zi Zai] (Dragon Knight)

Level: 147

Attack: 16554-20435

Defense: 12299

Health: 77,525

Magic: 15400

Charm: 683

CBN Battlenet Ranking: 6

.....

I gripped the Ruler's Cape in my hand and revealed the stats in the air, “This was my old cape. It's a Divine Tier equipment. Who wants it? I'm giving it out for free!”

In the end, One Second Hero took it. The Ruler's Cape added quite a bit of health and defense. It was very useful for him as a knight.

After we split up the rest of the spoils, we continued the battle. The mission before us was to kill the endless sea of Yasha soldiers. Ashen clouds hovered over the Sea of No Return and lightning continuously flashed across the ocean's horizon. It was as though those demons of the Sea of No Return were also being cursed by the heavens. However, I could see the Sea Demon King Han Lin pushing closer and closer. I could even

see that he sat atop an enormous shelled monster. At his feet was an army of demon soldiers. The Sea Demon King's entourage was so impressive that even King Rob would feel a little admiration and envy. Thinking about it, it made sense. Han Lin was a carefree emperor at the bottom of the sea. Naturally, he worried about far less than King Rob.

"Is Han Lin about to make a move?" Han Yuan nervously asked as he stared into the distance.

Long Xing replied, "Looks like it... The final battle is here!"

Xiao Ye coldly laughed, "Look at our Royal Army, do we even have the strength to meet Han Lin in battle?"

As he said that, Xiao Ye looked at me, "General, we... There's no need for us to act as the vanguard, is there? We've already lost over half of the Royal Army's brothers. If we meet Han Lin in battle, I'm afraid that not a single one of our men will be left."

I felt my heart clench as I thought about my men and nodded, "Let's kill all of the Yasha troops before us. The Royal Army will maintain its current position and will not fight on the frontlines against Han Lin."

"Thank you, general!"

.....

Right then, a conch suddenly rang from the central army. A messenger dashed over and shouted, "All generals be cautious, the Sea Demon King Han Lin's advance is just a pretense. The Blood Giant Kehl is leading 100,000 Giants through the Fierce Wind Forest. They've already ambushed our injured camp that was posted there. They cut through seventy thousand of our soldiers. It looks like the Hybrid Demons true target is Tian Ling City. All armies, leave a third of your soldiers here to defend against Han Lin. The rest set off for the south and prepare for battle against the Blood Giant's armies!"

I sat atop my battle horse and couldn't help but feel a little faint. Motherf*cking, the AI of these NPCs was really high. They actually managed to trick all of the generals and players of Tian Ling City.

Chapter 791: The Inception of the Heavenly Water Halberd

“Commander, should we go and provide reinforcements to the Fierce Wind Forest?”

Han Yuan raised his bloody spear, his face covered in dried mud and blood. I could barely see his eyes past all the dirt. He clenched his teeth, “There’s just too few of our men left. We don’t even have enough for a decent battle. If we go and fight another battle against the Blood Giants, I’m afraid that we won’t have anyone left. General, please think twice!”

I sat upon my Flying Scythe Horse and examined the scene before me. It was clear that the Royal Army had no strength left after the past few fierce battles. Over half of the people left had sustained injuries. If we continued like this, we would only be rushing towards our deaths.

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and said, “Royal Army, retreat. The adventurers will deal with Han Lin’s final attack. As for the Fierce Wind Forest, there’s the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army there, no need for us to go.”

Long Xing was stunned. He walked over with his blade and said, “My lord, are you planning on going against a royal decree? If his majesty decides to pursue this, I’m afraid the Royal Army won’t be able to stand against the punishment!”

I smiled, “It’s no problem, I’ll take all responsibility. Besides, if the Royal Army really were to go to the Fierce Wind Forest, there’s a chance that Blood Giant Kehl will recognize us. With a single blow, he’ll be able to demolish us. At that point, I won’t have a Royal Army. Why should I be afraid of defying a decree? How about this; Long Xing, Han Yuan, take the rest of the soldiers and go into the Southern district of the Fierce Wind Forest and take care of the wounded. Do not get close to the Blood Giants. That is how we’ll do this!”

Han Yuan replied, “My lord, what about you?”

I looked over at the movements on the water and said, “Han Lin is about to lead the final wave of Sea Demons. I will guard this place with my friends. You guys must immediately head to the Fierce Wind Forest, and hurry!”

“Yes sir!”

.....

The Royal Army’s infirmary camp leaned against each other and retreated. Long Xing and Han Yuan began directing soldiers to push over the Crossbow Carts and cannons. Close to thirty thousand Royal Army soldiers had come to face the Sea Demon Tribe in battle. Now there were less than fifteen thousand left. While we took heavy damage, after that bitter battle, every surviving veteran rose at least five levels and a tier. Overall, it was actually an enormous increase to our battle power. If they went through another couple of battles like this, then these NPCs would become even stronger. This was the ultimate goal I had for these battles. If the Royal Army’s overall strength was on par, if not stronger, than some top tier player teams, then that would truly be a battle force. Otherwise, it’d be too easy for them to be whittled down by the player teams.

When the entire Royal Army retreated, I went to the [Zhan Long] camp. Li Mu, Qing Qian, Wan Er, and the rest were preparing the formations. They made sure each squad had a tank, a healer, and a damager. Otherwise, it would greatly affect their battle potential.

I could hear a horn sound across the sea’s horizon. The final attack was finally here. I looked over at the central camp and saw that King Rob’s central army actually didn’t retreat a single step. He sat in his camp with his daughter Pearl at his side. It looked like he was determined to make today Han Lin’s last day on earth. I did see that Theodore and Owen already took their troops to deal with the Blood Giants.

“He he!”

Li Mu smiled, “Han Lin is finally here. We get another chance to meet a Demon King Tier Hybrid Demon. How do you think he wants to die?”

Qing Qian giggled, “Brother Li Mu, stop joking around. I’d thank the

heavens and the earth if I survive this battle, and you're bluffing with talk about killing him? That's too unrealistic..."

Wan Er smiled, "Let's see how it goes. We'll let the NPC army go first and then make our move when we see the opportunity."

"Okay!"

.....

I saw that the formation on the sea banks was spread very thinly. [Legend], [Hero's Mound], [Vanguard], [Prague], and [Judgement]'s main forces were still there. It looked like the players were all waiting to see the stance of a Demon King. The Demon King Han Lin's escort was pushing closer and closer. It floated above the surface of the waves and hit the banks with a "Hua La!" A three-headed dragon sprang up from the ocean, shocking everyone. Han Lin's throne was being pulled by a three-headed dragon?

"What the f*ck, so flashy..." Wang Jian exclaimed.

I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword, "Steel Bladed Horsemen, prepare for battle!"

Right then, a bell sounded through the air—

"Ding!"

"System Notification: Please note, the Hybrid Demon King [Demon King Han Lin] with the Country Weapon [Water God's Halberd] (China) has appeared on the southern banks of the Sea of No Return. Kill the Sea Demon King and you will have a 100% chance of getting the Water God's Halberd. Warriors and Heroes, kill the enemy for the sake of your country's honor!"

.....

Everyone stiffened. Han Lin actually brought such a great gift with him. It looked like the Water God's Halberd was fated to stay within the Chinese server. The players from the other servers were probably dying of envy. Several main cities didn't even get their first Country Weapon and

the second one already appeared in the Chinese server. But it made sense. The Tian Ling City's territory was just so large and we had an enormous player population, so naturally we'd need more resources. Otherwise, how were we supposed to protect our borders?

"Prepare!"

Li Mu gripped his Neptune's Blade and excitedly said, "Another Country Weapon, f*ck yeah!"

I quickly raised my hand, "Don't, be more patient. This isn't a Demon Harvest BOSS, but Han Lin, the Hybrid Demon King. Let's just watch what happens and then move. Don't worry, a Sea Demon King won't die that easily."

"Okay!"

.....

I could see the skirmishes on the banks slowly die down. Han Lin's Twelve Generals had been killed. Four of them died in the hands of players. I, Fang Ge Que, Q-Sword, and Ye Lai each killed one. The other eight had been killed under the attacks of the Tian Ling City army. Han Lin only had several dozen thousand Yasha and Fishmen troops here, but it was still a long road until we defeated them all.

One of heavy shield-carrying Flame Dragon Soldiers couldn't help but cut through the suspense He raised his battle axe and laughed, "Sea Demon King Han Lin, you're actually left with so few soldiers? The end of the Sea Demons is finally here!"

As his words fell, the Sea Demon King Han Lin raised the Water God's Halberd in his right hand. He suddenly let go of his reins and the three-headed dragon plunged through the water and arrived right before the banks. "Ka Cha!" a claw slashed through the soldier's shield and body. One of the lieutenants of the Flame Dragon Army shouted, "Defend! Archers, prepare your arrows! Kill that dragon! D*mm*t, release!"

"Pu pu pu..."

Arrows flew into the sky like rain, but none of them managed to

penetrate the scales of the dragon. The remaining ten thousand Flame Dragon soldiers were extremely brave and immediately rushed forward to meet the dragon in battle. They surrounded it and continuously hacked at its scales.

“Grrrr...”

The dragon’s screech pierced through our ears. It began to twist its enormous body and swept its claws through the crowds of people. It then opened its mouth and let out a Frost Dragon Breath, turning a whole group of soldiers into a block of ice. Even the blood on the ground froze.

King Rob gripped his Sword of the King as he stood up in the central tent, “Pearl, have the Winds of Battle Army charge. We must kill that three-headed dragon!”

Pearl nodded and turned around to give orders to a middle aged man, “Teacher!”

That man was the Winds of Battle commander Bai Li Ting. He was clothed in light armor over his white robes. He leapt onto his horse and charged at the dragon with his staff in hand. With a roar, a blast of flames sprung from his staff and rushed towards the sky, engulfing the nearest head. The dragon’s screech shook the heavens and earth. All of its scales were burnt black and fell off with a “Clink clink.” The Flame Dragon Soldiers grabbed the opportunity and charged forward “Pu pu pu!” They cut into the Dragon’s body as a cannon ball blasted it as well!

“Peng!”

The dragon’s abdomen was completely blasted away and blood poured forth. Naturally, the dragon wouldn’t survive long after taking such heavy damage. With a cry, it fell onto the sandy beach, its blood dyeing all of the sand around it. With that, a Level 155 Demon Harvest BOSS died!

.....

The player camp on the other hand seemed incredibly patient. Not a single one of them went out to battle. They just stood and watched as the NPCs went to battle. At the same time, it wasn’t that they were being

cowardly, as [Valley of the Gods] War Tent gave a shout and took five hundred cavalry-type players charging into the battle. They were probably hoping to get some great experience or equipment from the dragon. Unfortunately, they had underestimated its strength. The second head of the dragon died under the attacks of Bai Li Ting and the Winds of Battle Army, but the third head killed over half of the [Valley of Gods] players with a few Dragon Breaths and a slash of its claws. In a blink of an eye, there were only several dozen of them left.

Then, the NPCs used their cannons and released several shots upon the dragon. With those hits, the dragon's body became soft and the moment that it was about to fall, War Tent actually miraculously charged up and killed that Demon Harvest BOSS and rose a couple of levels. War Tent's face was red with excitement. He picked up the equipment that it dropped and ran. Lu Dong Bing led a team of people to welcome him back, afraid that the third head would rip him apart before he even made it back.

Seeing War Tent get a lick of sugar, some of the other guilds started bustling with energy. Not long after, [Dao Jian Xuan], [Emperor's Blood], and [Knights Templar] all charged ahead to kill the last head of the dragon. Even [House of Prestige] couldn't sit around any longer. Bai Li Ruo Feng raised his bow and personally led a couple thousand people to battle.

.....

"Brother Xiao Yao, should we also charge?" Wang Jian said, "That dragon is a Demon Harvest Tier BOSS, and it's the personal guard of Han Lin. If we kill it, we might get some Demon Harvest weapons."

I shook my head, "No need, the Sea Demon King is too close to shore and can attack at any time. Let's pay close attention to his battle style. There's no need to care too much about one or two Demon Harvest weapons. Our goal is the Water God's Halberd!"

"Yes, sir!"

In the blink of an eye, under the NPC army and the players' attack, the third dragon's head dropped to around 20%. [House of Prestige]'s Vice Guildmaster Quick Thunder was red with excitement. He rushed forward

with a laugh, “Throw all your firepower! Team two, get close to the BOSS. When you get the chance, grab the equipment. Team 3, flank from the right but don’t attack. We have to keep Dao Jian Xuan’s people away from the BOSS. Don’t let them near the dragon!”

Dao Jian Xuan’s players were clearly unforgiving. The Vice Guildmaster Iron Courage roared, “Quick Lightning, you motherf*cker, you’re crossing the line!”

Quick Thunder paid no attention to him. He probably didn’t even put Iron Courage in his eyes and continued ordering people to kill the BOSS.

Chapter 792: Cower Before the Nine Dragons

As the saying goes, even a rabbit will fight in a corner, much less a man. Much less a fearless and arrogant Vice Guildmaster who was wielding a blade .

And so, Quick Like Thunder focused all of his [House of Prestige] forces to surround the BOSS while he focused on dealing damage. On the side, the seven hundred [Dao Jian Xuan] players took the opportunity. Attempting a charge, they shook the [House of Prestige] front lines. After several more, they finally created an opening for themselves.

“Die!”

Quick Like Thunder roared and swung his battle axe at them. Bai Li Ruo Feng coldly laughed and raised his bow as he wordlessly pressed closer. After letting loose a round of ranged arrows, his [Big Dipper Meteor] ripped through Iron Courage. After Bai Li Ruo Feng delivered a [Silencing Arrow], Quick Thunder surged forward and hacked his battle axe into Iron Courage. After a round of attacks from [Battle Axe Whirlwind], nearly 70,000 of his health emptied out. Disbelief filled his face. Never in his wildest dreams would Iron Courage have imagined that Quick Thunder and Bai Li Ruo Feng would instantly kill him in a wave of attacks.

Once Iron Courage died, [Dao Jian Xuan]’s Guildmaster Blade Hero was angered. He raised his blade and charged straight for Bai Li Ruo Feng. He did not expect his target to use a series of [Catapult]s to dodge his pursuit. Quick Thunder, on the other hand rushed right at Blade Hero. He laughed, “So, even a third rate guild like [Dao Jian Xuan] dares to compete with [House of Prestige]? Aren’t you overestimating yourselves too much now?”

.....

Right as Quick Thunder’s battle axe had cut off Blade Hero’s head, Bai Li Ruo Feng yelled out, “Thunder, careful!”

“What?!”

In that moment, Quick Thunder felt a surge of cold air above him. It was then that he realized a god-like man was right above him. This man carried a chilling halberd and was heading straight for him. He didn't have any chance to dodge, and took a hit straight to his shoulder. He was nailed right to the ground!

“Peng!”

“57812 ! ”

Those damage numbers were terrifying. Quick Thunder was just a berserker, and one that didn't fill up on his health points. That one hit had instantly killed him and he instantly turned into a corpse. The ambusher was none other than the Sea Demon King Han Lin!

“Hua hua...”

The winds billowed against his battle ropes and he coldly stood at the center of group of Iron Scaled Riders, a cruel smile resting on his lips. He suddenly raised his Water God Halberd, creating large waves and rising winds. All targets within a 30 yard radius took damage. The Iron Scaled Riders screamed as they were ambushed. That one attack was enough to turn all of them into blocks of ice. Almost every one of them took 70,000 damage and were instantly killed. Bai Li Ruo Feng escaped in the nick of time, otherwise he would've definitely died.

Raising his long bow, Bai Li Ruo Feng exclaimed, “Motherf*cker, just what kind of power does Han Lin have?! Hurry, kill that sea dragon! We're retreating!”

Unfortunately, it was all too late. A pit of rage rose in Han Lin as he watched his precious mount suffer. He stared directly at Bai Li Ruo Feng and shot forward like a bullet. He threw out his halberd. The speed of the attack was terrifying!

“Pu!”

“112737 ! ”

Six digit damage!

Bai Li Ruo Feng looked down to see the halberd piercing his chest. He seemed incapable of believing what had just happened. He must've never thought that the BOSS would be able to hit him from 70 meters away. Furthermore, that halberd's speed was too fast! There was no way he could dodge or hide from it.

“Ha!”

Han Lin coldly laughed. He opened his hand, and with a single gesture, the Water God Halberd flew out of Bai Li Ruo Feng's chest and back to the hands of its owner. In half a second, it was resting nicely in the hands of Han Lin, while Bai Li Ruo Feng fell to the ground and died.

.....

All of [Zhan Long]'s players were stupefied. This time, even Wang Jian thought it was unwise to attack now. [Legend], [Hero's Mound] and the others were all gaping at the scene before them. Without any hesitation, they all decided that it was a lost cause. Who would dare face the bloody Han Lin?

In the midst of battle, Han Lin had descended as though he were a king. Wielding the Water God Halberd in his right hand, and gathering an ice like power in his left, he shouted to his dragon, “Rise for me!”

“Shua!”

A frost shield appeared before the dragon, protecting it from further damage. Additionally, it even healed the dragon's wounds. The dragon's health was rising faster and faster. With a screech, it swept away a whole group of Iron Scaled Riders with its long tail. Han Lin then raised his Water God Halberd and stepped onto the beach. A wave of ice type magic surged outward, freezing an entire group of knights. Their health plummeted and in the blink of an eye, they all died.

All of this happened in seconds. [House of Prestige] lost close to two thousand people. A whole group of players were instantly killed by Han Lin and the others. A couple of the team leaders were so terrified by all of this that they immediately retreated with their squads in order to maintain at least a thousand man army for [House of Prestige]. Otherwise, [House

of Prestige] would've disappeared from the Sea of No Return Battle from that point on.

I rode my Flying Scythe Horse nearer to Han Lin, but didn't dare get too close. Han Lin's AI was very high, and could recognize any players with a high number of achievement points. It was exactly for that reason that Bai Li Ruo Feng was killed by him.

At the central tent, the old King Rob raised his Ruler's sword and stood in his tent and roared, 'Han Lin, have you forgotten about the alliance that you signed several hundred years ago? You agreed to never invade Tian Ling City. Yet now, you've joined the Hybrid Demons and brought your troops to our shores again?"

Han Lin coldly smiled, "Little sh*t, who knows where you even were when I signed the alliance, yet you dare say words like that to me? If your ancestors knew that this was how you died, wouldn't they be disappointed? Ha ha, seeing as you are claiming that I am breaking the alliance, I can argue that I haven't. After all, I had signed the alliance with Tully. Now that Tully is dead, the alliance is in effect, nullified. Besides..."

Han Lin revealed his sharp teeth in a wide grin, "Rob, do you even have the same might as your ancestor Tully? Do you have the same strength that was close to the Holy Realm? If not, then I'll be taking your life today!"

.....

When those words fell, Han Lin suddenly disappeared from his spot and appeared in a bright light that was shooting straight for the central tent. He roared, "Rob, leave your life here and now. Tian Ling City is mine!"

The old king shuddered, and a sliver of acceptance that his death was near appeared on his face.

Princess Pearl shouted and pulled out the sword at her hip. She stood right before her father, blocking any attempt. Her sword glowed with Dou Qi power. She clenched her teeth and shouted, "No matter what, I will not give you the chance to achieve your goals, you b*s*rd!"

Han Lin let out a malicious laugh as his halberd flew straight for the heart!

“Peng!”

Just as the tip of the spear was about to plunge into Pearl’s chest, it was contained in a magic dimension about five meters before her. Magic power emanated from the dimension. “Dang!” It was actually thrown backward and fell before Han Lin. The dimension in front of Pearl shattered.

“Oh!?”

Han Lin stiffened, “[Absolute Dimension]? Ha, Tian Ling City actually has a Master Mage? Who is it? Stand before me!”

Not far from Pearl, the commander of the Winds of Battle Army, Bai Li Ting stood out with his staff in hand. “Peng!” He rested his staff against the ground, initiating a magic circle. Bai Li Ting looked at Ha Lin and coldly said, “Sea Demon King, you do not belong to this land, why would you attempt to take this land?”

“So it was you!”

Han Ling laughed, “Alright, today, I will kill both you and Rob!”

Right then, the sounds of hooves suddenly thundered throughout the battlefield. A group of Winds of Battle cavalrymen dashed over. A lieutenant lead them in the front with a longbow in hand. He roared, “Prepare your [Dou Qi Shots] and release!”

All of the archers raised their bows and released their arrows. Each arrow was loaded with Dou Qi power. Clearly, the power was gathered by magic. They shot out like lightning. Han Lin coldly smiled took a defensive stance with his Halberd in front of his chest. As he did this, a magic shell surrounded his body. Not a single one of the arrows passed through. Even so, there was a clear effect on the magic shield. Clearly, it was whittling away his power in some way.

“Die!”

Han Lin suddenly shifted and left his magic shell. He charged right at the central encampment. Even if Bai Li Ting was a Master Mage, he wouldn't necessarily be able to parry any close combat attacks from Han Lin. It would be more accurate to say he definitely wouldn't be able to. Han Lin was a God tier BOSS, while Bai Li Ting was just a Demon Harvest one. One a God, one a Demon; the gap in strength and power was just too great.

A group of royal guards immediately stood out to hold off the incoming attack, but they were all thrown back by Han Lin's powerful winds.

"Ah?"

Pearl was stunned, shock written all over her face.

Right then, my Flying Scythe Horse arrived before the scene. I came charging from the right with my sword raised. With my Zhen Yue Blade and My Dragon Reservoir Sword, I rammed right into Han Lin's back. This ambush caught the god level BOSS completely by surprise, pushing him to the side!

"Peng!"

"17371 ! "

Even with both swords attacking together, I only managed to deal this much damage. I quickly recovered from the surprise and continued my charge forward. Using [Seven Star Teleportation], I instantly appeared before Han Lin and threw another slash with my Zhen Yue Blade right into his shoulder. "Peng!" my blade pressed into the Sea Demon King's body. But, a strong force pushed back, making my Zhen Yue Blade nearly fly out of my hand.

Using his shoulder to push against the Zhen Yue blade, Han Lin stood up. With a twist of my right wrist, I gathered strength in my Dragon Reservoir Sword, activating [Fierce Ice Blade].

"F*ck off!"

Han Lin suddenly swung his Water God Halberd. "Peng!" he shattered my [Fierce Ice Blade] effect and cut right into my chest!

“31772 ! ”

It felt as though my ribs all cracked and pain shot through my body.

Han Lin coldly smiled and raised his Halberd again. I could see a cold power gather at the blade. This was the attack that instantly killed Bai Li Ruo Feng. If it dealt a six figure damage to Bai Li Ruo Feng, how much better off would I be if I took this attack?

I didn't even have the chance to dodge. “Peng!” I felt the attack hit my chest. My [Wall of Dou Qi] completely shattered, and the hit had thrown my health bar into critical. Right then, my Violet Heaven Cape let out a dragon's whistle. A red and blue dragon lifted from the cape's embroidery and came to life, creating a shield around me. This was the special effect —[Twin Dragon]!

.....

“Oh?”

A group of Winds of Battle cavalry archers had all dashed into the central encampment. Han Lin frowned, “D*mn them, I will deal with them later!”

Chapter 793: Wheel Battle

I couldn't help but take a deep breath. Han Lin rushed into the central camp and killed several NPCs from the Winds of Battle. In turn, I gained precious time for my skills to recover. If I took another round of attacks from Han Lin, I was afraid I would die on this spot. The [Twin Dragons] saved me once, but for a short period of time, it wouldn't be able to save me a second time.

.....

“General Li...”

Pearl walked over and saw the deep gashes in my Hidden Dragon Armor, “You... Are you ok?”

I could see large tears welling up in the princess' eyes. I couldn't help but feel my heart soften. I was brought up to this position as the Royal Army Commander by her. The princess was actually worried about my safety against a terrifying enemy like Han Lin. That was enough to show that she wasn't just using me, or at least, it wasn't as simple as using me.

I wiped the scratches clean on the chest of my Hidden Dragon Armor and said, “I'm fine, your highness, you don't have to worry about it. But just what are we going to do about Han Lin? Almost no one here can kill him...”

Pearl turned around to the mage and said, “Teacher, what do you think?”

Bai Li Ning stood there with the aura of an immortal. But at that moment, he suddenly shuddered and spat out blood. It looked like he wasn't much better off than me. When his shield dimension broke, he took enormous damage.

King Rob raised his Ruler's Sword, frustration written across his face, “Pearl, General Li, do not initiate another attack. The Empire cannot lose commanders like you. Just let... Just let the warriors of the Winds of Battle army attack Han Lin. No matter how strong he is, there's a limit. As long as we whittle away at that strength, we'll be able to find an opportunity to

kill him. This time, we have to kill Han Lin and force thee Sea Demons out of our territory!”

I exclaimed, “We’re just going to let the Winds of Battle soldiers die for nothing? This...”

King Rob scoffed, “General Li Xiao Yao, don’t be too soft hearted. As a commander, you should know that sometimes, you have to be able to use any method possible for the sake of victory!”

I gave a curt nod, “Yes, your majesty...”

I quickly turned around and went back towards my camp. I gulped down a potion and leapt onto my horse. That’s when I saw that Wan Er, Li Mu and the others took a team of [Zhan Long] people and were only 200 yards away from the Central Camp. Not only that, but [Legend], [Hero’s Mound], [Judgement], and the [Prague] players were all there, waiting for Han Lin to die.

.....

“Xiao Yao!”

Ye Lai walked over with his battle axe in hand, “Just now, what happened with the king and the other NPCs? Han Lin hasn’t gone and killed the king yet, has he?”

I shook my head, “Not yet, but it’s hard to say in the future...”

The [Prague] guildmaster Yan Zhao came over and said, “This battle has lasted for a long time. Who knows how many soldiers from the Tian Ling City empire have died for this fight...For us players, it’s free equipment and experience, but for the future country battles, it’s not necessarily a good thing. The more soldiers from Tian Ling the die, the lower our defenses become.”

I smiled, “Uncle Yan Zhao, don’t worry too much. The city will spawn new soldiers. At the very least, we won’t have too few troops. Besides, this is a game, not the real world. Everything goes much quicker.”

“You’re right!” Yan Zhao looked at the distant cavalry charging at Han

Lin, “Including the players and the NPC, Han Lin has killed at least 20,000. F*ck, he’s a killing machine....”

Wan Er smiled reassuringly, “If he couldn’t, how would he have the face to hold the name as one of the top ten BOSSes in Destiny!”

Yan Zhao narrowed his eyes and smiled, “Wan Er, Han Lin is carrying the Water God’s Halberd. Are you guys interested? Ah, nevermind, forget I asked. How could [Zhan Long] not be interested. It’s a country weapon. The stats will undoubtedly be incredible.”

I replied, “The Water God’s Halberd, will go towards the person that can use it. How about we make a pact, whoever deals the last strike to Han Lin will be the one to use the Water God’s Halberd. That way we won’t start fighting amongst each other. How’s that sound? Fang Ge Que, Q-Sword, Jian Feng Han, Ye Lai, what do you think?”

Fang Ge Que raised his staff and smiled, “Xiao Yao’s suggestion isn’t bad. If we start fighting amongst each other, we’ll just be smashing our own foot. How about this, whoever killed Han Lin, will be the one who get’s the Water God’s Halberd. And then, the guilds in this pact must use their main forces to protect that halberd for ten hours, so that it doesn’t end in enemy hands. How does that sound? This kind of a gentleman’s pact is pretty good, don’t you think?”

Ye Lai nodded, “I agree.”

Jian Feng Han and Simple whispered for a bit and finally gave a nod, “[Vanguard] agrees as well.”

Q-Sword, “Alright!”

And with that, Yan Zhao Warrior, Mu Xuan, Misty Cloud and the other main guilds all gave their agreements. With that, the pact was made. I looked at my own skill set and saw that [Nine Heavens] had finished its cooldown. With this, the chances of me killing the BOSS was pretty high. Of course, it’d be the best if we could keep the Water God’s Halberd within [Zhan Long].

This all came with the condition that we first kill Han Lin. The current

difficulty was still too high for that.

.....

“Shua shua....”

In the Winds of Battle crowds, the halberd swept like a whirlwind, slicing through all of the knights and soldiers. Han Lin slashed at everything before him. He struck the Water God's Halberd into the ground and a power wave surged outward. The wave carried a massive destructive force, smashing all of the soldiers around him into mincemeat. Just that one attack was enough to kill several thousand of their soldiers.

Princess Pearl stood on a high platform, her face ashen, “Ah...”

The old king almost seemed like he couldn't bear sending more of the Winds of Battle troops to their deaths. Finally he commanded, “Magic Flame Army, go. We have to take Han Lin's head! Everyone, send out your navy ships and create a defensive line along the shore. We must cut off all chances of retreat for Han Lin. He must die here, or else we'll never have peace on our shores!”

Looks like old Rob was putting everything on the line to kill Han Lin.

Hooves thundered across the round and soon another branch of knights appeared. It was the NPCs from the Magic Flame Army. There looked to be around 30,000 of them. Looks like they were pretty elite as well. They began a barrage of attacks on Han Lin. Spears surged forward and arrows struck against his armor. Not long after, Han Lin roared, as the defense around his body was broken for the second time. A black arrow plunged into him.

“Ah....”

Han Lin was enraged. He pulled out the arrow and roared, “You cowardly humans. You actually dare to strike me with a poisoned arrow. D*mm*t, I will kill every last one of you!”

Only if we kill Han Lin is there a chance for us of surviving. Humans were not afraid of using shameless tactics like those.

After Han Lin activated [Aquamarine Surge], his breath became ragged. His body was riddled with poisonous arrows. The vicious poison was entering his bloodstream, and it looked like he was reaching his end. But even so, the Sea Demon King seemed to have endless energy. While his arms and chest were covered with arrows, he seemed to care less and continued swinging his Water God Halberd. The Magic Flame Army died in the droves, hacked apart by the cruel blade.

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Around twenty minutes later, Han Lin's health finally dropped below 50%. Less than half of the Magic Flame Army was left. Everyone was starting to get excited. Q-Sword raised his sword and said, "How about, we launch an attack now. If we keep this up, the NPC army will be completely decimated...."

Fang Ge Que furrowed his brow and said, "50% health.... Alright then, let's stop beating around the bush and just attack together. How does that sound?"

Ye Lai swung his battle axe and said, "Let's attack!"

With everyone so hyped up, I didn't want to rain on the parade and so I nodded, "Steel Blade Horsemen, follow me". I lead my cavalry and attacked the BOSS from the North. Hero's Mound, Judgement, Prague, and Legend can flank from all sides, Archers and Mages, do as best you can to get close and maintain continuous firepower!"

Everyone nodded. All of the main guilds charged forward. I took my 2000 Steel Blade Horsemen and charged out, launching the northern attack.

Right then, Qing Qian said into the guild chat, "Gale Forest is in complete chaos from battle. The Blood Giants aren't much better off than our side however. After they took several charges from each of the great armies, Ba Huang City's Princess Angela brought several armies over the Zi Wu Mountains and provided support there.

I nodded, "There's some rather strong NPC's over there. The strongest NPC's over here are Pearl and that Master Mage. But it looks like they

aren't much more useful than me.....”

Qing Qian grinned, “But of course, my brother Xiao Yao is the strongest!”

I felt a little burst of confidence rise in my chest. I took the Steel Blade Horsemen with me and roared, “Spread out! The vanguard of his blade is incredibly deadly. Everyone, do your best to minimize damage!”

The entire Steel Blade Horsemen Cavalry sirged forward. Wuite a few had already begun shooting [Sword Break] and [Flying Sword] skills at the BOSS. At least half of their skills had failed however since it didn't reach the BOSS. The site was both hilarious and stunning. Even the Steel Blade Horsemen had their moments!

.....

Even with everyone gathered together, Han Lin didn't shirk back and only grew even more frenzied. He swung his Halberd and charged straight into the cloud. Many of the players couldn't handle the area attacks and dropped like flies. A group of the[Legend] cavalry happened to be in the range of the rampage, and in the end only Enchanted Painting and Xuan Yuan Feng were left alive. It was utter cruelty!

“Charge!”

Li Mu swing his Neptune's Blade and cut right into the BOSS's back. Han Lin didn't even look back and threw a punch behind him. “Peng” Like Mu flew backwards. Thankfully the punch wasn't an attack by the Water God's Halberd or else Like Mu wouldn't be alive anymore.

“Careful!”

Just Feng Han raised his long sword and threw a ranged skill at the BOSS while Simple stood beside him, leading tactical. Right then, Han Lin looked up at Jian Feng Han. His Halberd shot out like lightning and buried itself right into Jian Feng Han's chest. It sounds around and ripped through is body. Jian Feng Han fell off his horse and died. Simple backed away in horror. That Water God's Halberd flew forward as though it were alive!

“Pu Chi!”

Simple was brought to her knees as well.

Ye Lai raised his blade and quickly retreated. He could see Han Lin twisting his hands and opening them. Frost magic raged outwards and the Queen Mu Xuan wailed and fell behind the BOSS. As though a light bulb went off, Ye Lai immediately galloped over and shouted, “Xiao Yao, be careful. That BOSS is targeting all people around him!”

Chapter 794: No Escape To the Sea of No Return

In reality, it was just Ye Lai had said. The Sea Demon King Han Lin seemed to be especially interested in the players who were close to him. First it was Bai Li Ruo Feng, then it was Jian Feng Han, Simple, and Mu Xuan. Almost half of the players in the top ten achievement points had been killed by him.

.....

“It’s you again.”

Han Lin suddenly spun around as his gaze rested on me. He raised his Water God’s Halberd and grinned, “Ant, let’s see who’s going to save you now.”

“Hua!” The Water God’s Halberd flew past me and I quickly raised my Zhen Yue Blade to parry the blow. I was currently number one in the Achievement Rankings. The fact that Han Lin wanted to kill me was well within my predictions. After all, I had another very important status. I was the commander of the Royal Army. That was enough of a reason for Han Lin to want to cut me to pieces. After all, it was easy enough to guess that for Han Lin to lead this siege against Tian Ling City, the Hybrid Demon Kings must have promised him something great. And there is nothing else that would make him break a peace treaty other than Tian Ling City itself. Afterwards, Da Lin, Lanais, and the other Hybrid Demons only have to use Tian Ling as a foothold to rage war upon the rest of the great cities.

“Keng.”

My wrist went numb as Han Lin’s blade rammed against my own. I nearly lost my grip on the Zhen Yue Blade. I retreated several steps from the impact of the clash. Han Lin had an incredible attack and he immediately threw a second slash right onto my shoulder. Blood spurt forth and my Violet Heaven Cape was torn. I lost 50,000 health to that one slash.

“Hong.”

A dragon screech sounded and holy power surged forth from the Violet Heaven Cape. Two dragon spirits rose up into the air and encircled my body, protecting me from all damage. However the Twin Dragon's shield's durability was linked with the user's attack power and this Twin Dragon shield's durability clearly wasn't enough to stand against Han Lin's explosive hit.

“You will die.”

Han Lin's words were filled with malice. He reached out, grabbed my cape, and dragged me by my back. As soon as I was in range, he threw a fierce kick into my abdomen.

I quickly raised both of my arms to block the attack. As I did that, I cast a Level 12 [Cleansing Rain] while gulping down a potion. My health jumped back up, holding death at bay.

“20,435.”

“20,000.”

My base attack determines the effect of my [Cleaning Rain]. I instantaneously recovered a large amount of my health. Han Lin's second attack threw my health back into critical and the impact threw me backwards.

Blades of wind encircled Han Lin's legs as he activated another area-of-effect attack. I felt my heart sink. Is this how I would die?

Right then, Han Lin's body suddenly shuddered and a “Stun” symbol appeared over his head. It only lasted for 0.4 seconds. I saw Qing Qian's figure flash before me as she shouted, “Brother Xiao Yao, run! You can't win against this one.”

Han Lin roared in anger and he swung his Water Halberd at Qing Qian. She couldn't parry such an attack! A breeze brushed past my face and I saw a beautiful figure suddenly rise up before Qing Qian. Wan Er opened up her umbrella with one hand to block the dagger. “Peng!” Sparks flew and she was thrown backwards. She grabbed Qing Qian in the process and

the two girls were thrown far back.

Han Lin growled in anger and was about to pursue, but a white horse suddenly dashed forward. It was Matcha on her mount. Han Lin roared, “Meddlesome ants, die!”

He threw three separate attacks with his Water God’s Halberd. “Pa pa pa!” They landed against Matcha’s Lion King Shield. Right now, Matcha’s reaction speed was already at the top of the class. She rammed the Lion King Shield against the ground activating [Heavenly Shield] and [Phantom Holy Shield] before the attacks had hit. In the end, the Lion King Shield took all three attacks, while Matcha maintained around 20% of her health. She displayed one of the top survivability skills in all of Tian Ling City.

“Matcha, hurry up and leave.” Wolf called out from a distance.

Thankfully, Ye Lai lead his Frost Rams to charge forward, giving Matcha a chance to escape. In the next moment, a [Blade Tempest] ripped through the Steel Blade Horsemen, the Frost Ram Horsemen, and the Azure Oxen. This was truly a battle of lives. Dong Cheng, Dancing Forest, and the others were far away as they cast their spells. Furthermore, they were constantly shifting locations while casting to avoid being locked by the Halberd’s [Wind Blade]. Just one hit would be an instant kill.

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“My god...”

I sat on my horse around a hundred yards away from the battle. At least this way, I wouldn’t be targeted so easily. The Twin Dragon skill on my Violet Heaven Cape had a ten minute cool down. I needed to wait for that cooldown to reset before I could try engaging again. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have the confidence to survive an attack from Han Lin.

Li Mu and Wan Er both came over to me. They were both among the top twenty players in the Achievement Rankings. Han Lin was especially aggressive towards us. Going after him again was equivalent to committing suicide. If we were to engage, we would at least have to wait until Han Lin was close to dying.

The sea breeze picked up as all the top players of Tian Ling City leapt into battle against the Sea Demon King, only to be killed in the droves. Within twenty minutes, over 100,000 players had died at the hands of the Sea Demon King. Bodies piled up in layers, even though they disappeared fairly quickly. I could see a thick layer of blood coating Han Lin's Water God Halberd. There were constant screams of despair. This King of the Sea of No Return had a pride that we could not understand. After all, everyone's target was the Halberd in his hands.

Li Mu gripped his reins and turned to me. "Quite a few people left Moon City and entered the Chinese territory. I think they're trying to take advantage of us. But, I'm afraid that by the time they arrive here, the battle will already be over. Additionally, Port City, Flame Cloud City, and some others are planning on crossing the War God's River to come to this battlefield. At least several thousand of them drowned in the process. They truly underestimated the underwater current in that river.

I smiled, "Our mission today is to kill Han Lin. Once we do that, we'll have at least struck that off our list."

"Yes sir."

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After a few minutes, the Tian Ling City soldiers seemed to rise up again. King Rob waved his hand and another 50,000 man army surged forward and fought side by side with the players. Arrows fell like rain. The shield armor around Han Lin was on the verge of breaking. Despite being covered in blood and injuries, Han Lin was still full of strength and continued raging amongst the crowd of people.

King Rob stood at the top of the stage with his hand on his hilt and shouted, "Han Lin, do you see this? You are fighting a lone battle! Where are your allies? Why don't I see Lanais? Where's Ignaus and Gawain? Each and every one of them have the ability to help you in this war. But in the end, despite your legacy, you'll end up dying here. It is truly a pity."

A surge of power suddenly surrounded Han Lin, blowing all of the Tian Ling soldiers around him into pieces. He coldly smiled, "Robert, you are a

coward hiding behind a mask. Did you think that you would be able to live out the rest of your days peacefully if you hide in Tian Ling City? Ha ha, stop dreaming! The Hybrid Demon Army will cut off your head and hang it on your walls to show everyone. Even when you're dead, we'll make sure that you won't have a moment's peace."

King Rob shook in anger. "Commander Ludlow, kill him. I will have Han Lin's heart soaked in wine tonight."

Han Lin narrowed his eyes and continued his rage. What astonished me was the fact that even though Han Lin was a god level warrior, because he spent so much time underwater, he didn't seem to be very skilled at flying. Otherwise, he would've easily escaped once he found out that he was losing this war. There was a mass of Tian Ling City war boats that created a chain along the shore, but in reality, that was just a front—everybody knew that.

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Time passed by slowly. But, not long after, Han Lin's health fell below 10%. [Zhan Long], [Judgement], and the [Legend] players surrounded the BOSS. Combined with the attack from the Tian Ling City's NPC army, Han Lin's blood fell at an even quicker rate. Furthermore, the blood flowed continuously from all of the injuries he had received. It was a sign that he was nearing his end.

"Keng."

Li Mu pulled out his Neptune's Blade and said, "It's time for us to re-enter the stage, right?"

I shook my head. "Wait a little longer. He hasn't revealed his ultimate strike yet...."

"Yes sir."

Just after I said that, Han Lin let out a roar and a ray of light shot from his Water God's Halberd into the sky. Soon after, he chanted, "Almighty Heavens, Brilliant Waves, drown all that is before you."

The earth trembled and a tsunami wave that rose several hundred

meters above the ground towered before everyone. Han Lin waved his hand, commanding the wave to crash against the shores. I quickly shouted into the guild chat: “Everyone, stab your weapons into the ground and stabilize your positions. Take a deep breath and make sure you aren’t swept away by the tide. Otherwise, you’ll be taken into the Sea of No Return, where more Yashas are waiting.”

All of the Steel Blade Horsemen got off their horses and plunged their blades into the ground. I did the same. I reached out and held Wan Er in my arms. Her dagger was too small of course, and I was worried she wouldn’t be able to stand against the might of a tsunami.

After a few seconds, the towering tsunami crashed against us. I could even see the great military tent where the Central Army was located collapse from the impact. Like that, the lavish gifts were all swept away by the tide. I could hear the screams of the Winds of Battle Army as they fell to the wave and drowned. Pearl grabbed the old king’s hand and held onto a strong tree.

The tsunami lasted for three minutes before calming back down. The ground returned to its original position. All of the players who managed to keep their position were soaked in seawater. Over 70% of the players had been washed away by that wave, and a very few percentage of the army was still surviving. Princess Pearl’s Winds of Battle Army had less than 20,000 men left. The losses were severe. At the very least, Pearl looked to be losing her spirits.

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“Haha....ha...ha....”

Han Lin huffed and knelt to the ground on one knee. The hand gripping the Water God’s Halberd was slightly shaking. Activating a skill of that level must have sucked away most of his energy.

Pearl clenched her teeth and pointed with her sword. “Kill.”

The remaining soldiers charged forth on her orders. [Legend]’s Fang Ge Que, Enchanted Forest and the others followed en suite. Han Lin had used the last of his life to activate that curse. Now he only had 3% of his health

left.

However, against the charge of players and NPCs alike, Han Lin couldn't help but let out one last malicious laugh. "I am the King of the Seas. Right now, I am standing on the border of the Sea of No Return. Don't you even dare think of killing me on my own territory. Haha, just how many soldiers have you lost to this battle, while I still have countless men in the water tribe waiting at the bottom of the sea. I just need a month before I can regain 500,000 in troops. Just what will save you from their vengeance?"

King Rob shook with anger, his face ashen.

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Right then, Frost's voice resounded through the skies: "Han Lin, after killing so many people, are you sure you can still return to the sea?"

Chapter 795: The Final Owner Of The Water God's Halberd

“Who?!”

Han Lin looked up, his eyes fierce. “You... you’re Frost?”

Frost stood in the air with her clothing fluttering with the wind. The Severing Beauty Sword gleamed in her hand. You could see remnants of fiery blood that stained the blade. It was the color of Giant blood. She had finally left Gale Forest to provide reinforcements for the Sea of No Return.

Once Frost arrived, I felt my heart settle. Her arrival signaled the beginning of the end for Han Lin. After he had killed so many Tian Ling City soldiers, there was no way we would let him leave unscathed. Han Lin was underestimating the strength of us human soldiers too much. At the very least, it was obvious that he did not place enough importance on Frost and the Dragon City Army.

Frost stood in the air and looked down at Han Lin with a smile. “Is that the Sea Demon King? Don’t you typically guard the Sea of No Return and never question what happens outside? What brings you on land? Looks like you’ve truly grown tired of living.”

Han Lin coldly smiled, “Frost, who do you think you are? You’re just a small human general in charge of guarding a city. Everyone else seems to think you’re some super human, but I don’t see anything special. Besides... if you were truly strong, then it is only fitting that I die in your hands and not in the hands of some ugly, nameless and hairless brat.”

Li Mu shuddered, “Motherf*cker, even the NPCs know that I’m ugly?”

Wang Jian nodded and comforted him. “Boss, don’t think too much of it. You’re the type that’s ugly on the outside but kind on the inside.”

I raised a fist with a smile. “Wang Jian really knows how to put ice on the wound.”

Li Mu’s face was completely pale, as though he didn’t want to recognize

us as brothers any longer.

King Rob stepped onto a large boulder in the middle of the ruins. It was one of the foundations of the central army camp. All of the wood had been washed away by the tsunami. “Keng!” He pulled out the Ruler’s Sword and roared, “Warriors of Tian Ling City, charge! Kill Han Lin, kill him!”

All of the knights roared in response. Their footsteps rang like thunder as they rushed forward.

I pulled out my own Zhen Yue Blade and flipped onto my horse. “Let’s go, the BOSS only has 33% of his health left. It’s our turn to attack too!”

Over a thousand Steel Blade Horsemen cheered in response and followed my lead. Not only us, but the other Tian Ling City guilds also surged forward. There looked to be about seventy to eighty thousand people in this one wave.

Han Lin laughed like a maniac and flicked his Water God’s Halberd. The blade cut open the ground, instantly killing a group of [Judgement] Frost Ram Knights. “Come at me. No matter how many of you there are, I will kill every last one of you. The power of the Water God’s Halberd is limitless. I will never bow before you!”

He swept the powerful halberd around him, creating a fierce whirlwind that even I and the Steel Blade Horsemen couldn’t charge past. All I could see beyond the flying debris was a group of Dragon Sword Horsemen from [Prague] that got sliced up in the winds. “.....”

Frost’s face remained tranquil. She slowly raised her Severing Beauty Sword into position. Her graceful figure suddenly shot forward like lightning, striking right at the center of the whirlwind. “Peng!” Han Lin was thrown backwards from the force of the strike and a large wound opened up on his palm. Blood poured out. He had taken so much damage that he couldn’t even hold his stance before Frost’s strike.

“Ahh....”

With a cry of pain, Han Lin tightened his grasp on the Water God’s Halberd. A murderous glint lit up his eyes. He raised his hand to his

mouth and bit it, breaking the skin. He then pressed it against the blade of the halberd and shouted, "Sleeping Water God, please, open your cold eyes and pour your power into this blade. I promise to you that even in my death, I shall protect the water tribe!"

"Hmmmmmm...."

A loud hum rose from the blade as the halberd began to emit golden rays of light. The light wrapped around Han Lin's body, creating a golden armor.

It seemed as though he had powered up quite a bit.

"Be careful!"

I roared out a warning, but the Steel Blade Horsemen charging in from the flanks had moved too quickly. Han Lin roared and opened his palm. Suddenly, an empty hole opened up right in the middle of the sand, swallowing a group of Steel Blade Horsemen. All that was left of them were numerous pieces of equipment, cards, and potions. But besides that, there wasn't any sign of them!

Frost was now enraged. She sped forward and threw a [Cosmic Blade]!

"Keng!"

The Water God's Halberd clashed with Severing Beauty, creating several sparks. Han Lin's attack had actually pushed Frost back a few steps. A trickle of blood emerged from the side of her lips. Looks like she had taken some damage during the Battle of Gale Forest.

Han Lin crowed and retreated towards the Sea of No Return. "Frost, do you really think you can stop me from returning to the sea? Stop dreaming! All you have is the body of a Superior God, but you don't possess a hint of the power and skill that a Superior God should!" Frost didn't waste a single breath and surged forward, landing three blows from different angles!

Han Lin was clearly becoming even more frenzied. Even with 3% health left, he refused to retreat. Instead, his halberd shuddered and he pushed Frost backwards! He then opened his hand at the Tian Ling City warboats

and roared. Right then, a tornado rushed past, splitting the boats into splinters.

Nobody would have imagined that Han Lin had a skill like that still hidden up his sleeve. Even Fang Ge Que and I halted in our steps to watch. Just who would still have the courage to take Han Lin on after seeing a sight like that?

Disdain filled Han Lin's expression. "Frost, just what will you use now to keep me here?"

Frost stood at the shoreline, her emotionless eyes peering straight forward. She suddenly took a step back and turned around, walking straight towards the sea water. The moment she stepped into the water, a "Sss" sounded. Meters of ice spread from below her feet, freezing the sea water. She then stabbed her Severing Beauty into the ice. With her back towards all of us, she continued stepping forward, creating petals of ice with each delicate step. Soon enough, the entire shoreline had turned to ice.

"Hua!"

Frost suddenly leapt into the air and landed in the middle of the sea. "Pa!" She created an enormous frost magic circle. Right after that, the ice spread out far and wide, creating a thick layer throughout the bay. Nobody would have imagined that Frost would actually freeze the ocean!

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"Ah....." Han Lin let out a shocked voice. He charged straight for the ice with his Water God's Halberd in hand and threw a heavy slash at it. "Peng!" I could feel the godly power radiating from that strike, and yet the ice remained just as it had before. This thick layer of ice now contained some of Frost's godly power. Even the Water God's Halberd couldn't break through the enchantment.

"Kill!"

Princess Pearl raised her long sword and lead the knights of the Winds of Battle army straight towards the ice.

It was only then that the player teams awoke from their reverie. This was Han Lin's final moments. In other words, it was our chance to shine!

The Steel Blade Horsemen all galloped forward. The noise of battle and fighting rose up over the ice. Han Lin didn't have any way of retreating back into the ocean, and he had used up all of his power in that battle against Tian Ling City. Unfortunately for him, the 3% health he had left was slowly being whittled away. This king of the Sea of No Return was meeting his end!

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"Prepare your targets!"

I opened my hand, shooting my Dragon's Hook through the air!

Han Lin roared and swept out his halberd. "Keng!" the blade knocked away my Dragon's Hook. I quickly continued dashing forward. I swung my long sword, only to see that Han Lin's target wasn't me, but rather...Fang Ge Que! Fang Ge Que was extremely calm. He continuously cast spells onto the BOSS. Furthermore, he continuously used three [Dimensional Leap]s, dragging Han Lin's aggro straight towards [Legend]'s formation. Seeing this situation, I felt a shiver run down my spine. Motherf*cker, was the Water God's Halberd really destined to end up out of [Zhan Long]'s hands?

In that next second, a round of system alerts rang through the sky—

"Ding!"

System Notification: Congratulations player [Little Scholar], for killing one of the Hybrid Demon Kings [Sea Demon King Han Lin]. You've received the reward: Level+4, Charm+100, Reputation increase, and Achievement+400!

Everyone was stunned. To think that Little Scholar, an insignificant flag bearer was the one to kill Han Lin. His death was truly shameful. In the next moment, the Water God's Halberd appeared in Enchanted Painting's hand. Fang Ge Que raised his staff and walked forward with only 7% of his health left. He smiled to us and said, "Now, it's time to fulfill our promise.

The Water God's Halberd is now [Legend]'s. This is an agreement between men. All you guildmasters have to send some men to help us guard this godly weapon!"

Li Mu was a little speechless. "You f*cker...."

Ye Lai candidly said, "Alright then, a promise is a promise. I'll leave a thousand Frost Battle Rams to help you protect the halberd!" I added, "There will probably be players from Moon City and Flame Cloud City who want to steal that Water God's Halberd. How about.... having Enchanted Painting go to a player city. She can take refuge in [Zhan Long]'s Dragon's Den. There's hundreds of thousands of NPC soldiers there to protect her. There's no reason to believe she'd be in any danger there."

Xuan Yuan Feng seemed skeptical. "We should go to [Legend]'s Nine Cloud City.... [Zhan Long] just needs to send a troop to help guard us."

I nodded. "Yong Jie, take two thousand knights with you, alright?"

One Second Hero nodded in frustration. "Alright then...."

The Hero's Mound Guildmaster Q-Sword walked up and said, "Fang Ge Que, did Han Lin drop any other goods?"

Fang Ge Que smiled, "A Deity Level ring. It adds attack damage. I've given it to Ah Jin already. The other was a set of Demon Harvest tier leg guards. I've taken that for myself. And finally, there was a Demon Harvest Sword. That was given to Lu Chun Yang. Q-Sword fumed in silence.

To be honest, the rewards were actually pretty good, but they weren't truly impressive. After all, Han Lin was one of the fifteen god level BOSSes. Dropping a Deity Level equipment wouldn't be too difficult. As such, this Deity Level ring wasn't very impressive.

Right then, Wan Er piped up. "Now that we're done fighting, why hasn't there been an explanation on how the rewards will be given to us?"

Li Mu also had a puzzled expression. "Yea, exactly!"

Then I said, "Let's go to Gale Forest. The Blood Giant Kehl has yet to

die!”

“Let’s go!” This was another chance. Han Lin was now dead and he dropped a Water God’s Halberd. [Legend] had its entire guild and the support of several other guilds to protect that weapon. And so if we could really kill the Blood Giant Kehl, then [Zhan Long] would have a rather interesting opportunity. After all, the achievement points were still growing. Killing the Blood Giants and reaching number one in the rankings was now top priority. Who knows, perhaps a reward will drop that’s even more impressive than the Water God’s Halberd.

I looked at the worn out [Zhan Long] players before me and I couldn’t help but smile. “Let’s go home first, fix up our equipment, and replenish our potions. After that, we’ll head to Gale Forest and see if this Blood Giant is as strong as he sounds!”

Everyone nodded. “Yes sir!”

Chapter 796: What Fault?

Tian Ling City was already in battle mode. Everyone was much more nervous than in the past. Even the little peddler didn't dare to shout as loudly, as though afraid that he would attract a Hybrid Demon's wrath upon himself.

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After I fixed up my equipment and replenished my potions, I went straight out of the city. Li Mu, Wang Jian, and Wan Er all met up with me on the way. After the battle of the Sea of No Return we took heavy losses among our members. At the moment, at the very most we could send out 1500 Steel Blade Horsemen, 2000 regular Knights, along with the players from other classes, we would have a total of 7000 or so. However, if we're just fighting against the Blood giant Kehl, then it was useless to just rely on numbers. A BOSS on this rank clearly needed a strong NPC to attack along side us. Thankfully we have Frost, so that wasn't an issue.

Gale Forest, Last minute tents and preparations were being made throughout the forest. Wild bears, boars and other forest animals didn't dare to come out from the shrubbery. Gale Forest was practically completely occupied by the humans. I continued trekking forward, and once I had made it out of the shrubbery, I was stunned by the scene before me—

There was a lake right before me, the rumored Deer Lake. It was the only lake in Tian Ling City that was directly connected with the Sea of No Return. Countless war boats were docked in the lake. All of the war boats that came from the Revered One had been made to look like the human made boats under Luo Lin's direction. Standing on the boats were numerous Magic Sword Masters, Level 4 Hybrid demons. Each boat had a line tied to the end of the war boat with Stone Giants at the other end. Motherf*cker, so that's how those Giants made it here?

The Giants had incredible vitality, and while they couldn't swim, they couldn't drown either. While the Hybrid Demons couldn't match the

intelligence of humans, idiots had idiotic plans. Just seeing this sight nearly made me laugh.

However, it is exactly this kind of stupid idea that left the Tian Ling City armies with no counterplan. Most of the Flame Dragon Army and Xia Yu Army soldiers were guarding the two banks. Cannon fire lit up on both sides and arrows flew, but there was none of it could stop the advance of the Blood Giant Army onto the shores. Masses of Magic Sword Masters rushed onto land and clashed with the NPC soldiers.

“Another chance to earn achievement points?” Li Mu smiled and pulled out his Neptune’s Blade, “I didn’t go back to Tian Ling City to repair my Neptune’s Blade for nothing! Brothers, prepare for battle!”

There were only a few guilds that had built up a formation to take on the Hybrid Demons. All of the shrubbery surrounding the Deer Lake had been trampled flat or used to make tools. I could see countless bodies lying on the banks. Clearly a fierce battle had already ensued here. Only a few of the small guilds were fighting the Hybrid Demon attack here and there.

The arrival of [Zhan Long]’s seven thousand man army was without a doubt a morale boost for everyone there. With the fifteen hundred Steel Blade Horsemen opening the path and clearing out an area near the lake for us to set up our formation. Healers, archers and other ranged players lined up into their respective places and began to attract the Magic Sword Masters towards us. [Zhan Long]’s remaining 1500 Steel Blade Horsemen were all the cream of the crop. Over half of them were in possession of the Black Flame set. Furthermore, they had the support of healers, giving them enough advantage to not die while killing these Magic Sword Masters.

I raised my sword and dashed to the shores, killing the Magic Sword Masters one by one. Afterwards, I used a ranged spell to aggro a Level 5 Hybrid demon Giant onto the shores. Several Steel Blade Horsemen rushed over and killed the giant in a couple of slashes. Once they received the achievement points, they went out to search for the next target. We had been fighting this battle for close to 20 hours, but nobody complained about feeling tired or weary. Ever since the Battle of the Sea of

No Return until now, we were under constant stress and didn't even get a chance to breathe. If this Battle of Deer Lake doesn't end, then this event won't end. It was still early in the game, however, and I could feel my heart beat faster in excitement. This time the Hybrid Demon Territory sent out three of their BOSSes. Luo Lin had yet to reveal himself, the Blood Giant Kehl was in the lake and Han Lin had been killed. This time, if we could kill Kehl as well, then we'd have defeated two of the Hybrid Demon Kings!

The Hybrid Demon forces have always been a bitter pain for the players, and as the country battles near, we must deal with the Hybrid Demons behind us. Otherwise, how else would we be able to fight Moon City, Flame Cloud City and Port City with all our forces?

I charged ahead, killing monsters left and right along the way. Without my noticing, I took the several dozen Steel Blade Horsemen all the way to the Flame Dragon encampment. I could see a hastily made stage set up at the center for the general. At some point, the old king and Princess Pearl had brought their own armies to the same encampment. I could see Theodore, Owen, Les and Luke standing on the stage.

From a distance, one of the messengers shouted, "The Commander of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao, presents himself before His Majesty!"

I felt my heart sink. Motherf*cker... they better not waste too much of my precious time. But, no matter what, I had to go. After all, if the old king was planning on rewarding me, then that would most likely mean more achievement points for me. I was not satisfied with remaining as a small general. I needed to climb up the rankings in order to command more troops.

I carried my sword and walked my horse to the stage. When I was at the foot, I slid off and sheathed my blade before stepping forward.

The crown prince Theodore didn't seem very happy and he coldly looked at me, "Li Xiao Yao, kneel! Do you know your crime?!"

I stared right into his eyes and replied calmly, "What is my crime, and why must I kneel?"

Theodore let out another cold laugh, "You ordered your Royal Army

troops to camp on the western side of the Gale Forest. There isn't a single Hybrid Demon there. It's clear that you're just afraid of the battle. How could a cowardly man like you be guiltless?"

With a matter-of-fact tone, I replied, "The Royal Army already fought tooth and nail against the Sea Demons in the Battle of the Sea of No Return, such that we have taken heavy losses. We have but ten thousand men left. Over 80% of them are injured. Their battle power is less than a third of what it normally is. Telling them to fight right now is asking them to die. Your highness, does your heart bleed for your soldiers? Do you have an ounce of kindness in your chest? If, of the hundred and forty thousand soldiers in your Flame Dragon Army, only twenty thousand were left alive, and only two or three thousand could still fight, would you still send them to their deaths?"

Theodore's ears were hot after my words, and he was so appalled he couldn't say a word.

Thankfully, the old king was more sensible and said, "Commander Li Xiao Yao lead his Royal Army through many a blood bath, that was all seen by me. Theodore, there's no need to feel so responsible. The Royal Army will eventually become a major force in the empire's military. Allow some tinder to remain. With Commander Li Xiao Yao around, do not fret that the Royal Army will be able to once again rise up and become a trump card for the Tian Ling Empire!"

Pearl smiled, "Father is wise. May the Royal Army will remain firm, brave and courageous. After this battle, when we rebuild the Royal Army, it will become an army that can fight alongside the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army!"

After Pearl's words, I felt a surge of happiness in my heart. I could tell that Theodore and Owen weren't too happy. The two princes didn't look very happy. They were both extremely prideful men, and now that they had been defeated multiple times in a row, how could they coexist with an outsider like me?

As she said that, Pearl looked over at the battle and said, "Unfortunately,

my Winds of Battle Army only has twenty thousand left. We were once a strong and courageous army that could face any challenge it was given....”

The old king looked at his daughter and gave a doting smile before patting her on the shoulder and saying, “Do not worry. After this battle, I will ask that those dusty marquis and dukes deploy half of their armies to you. Those old men hold tens of thousands of soldiers. They hold over five hundred thousand in total. I’ll make sure that your Winds of Battle Army will regain its hundred thousand. Do not worry, you may also choose from the Battle Academy. In desperate times like these, I do not see any need to wait for them to graduate any longer.”

Pearl leapt in joy, “Thanks father!”

On the side the two princes expressions grew uglier. In some ways, the doting that Pearl receives from the old king, far surpasses that of both the princes.

I smiled at their misfortune. Theodore was always dissatisfied with my Royal Army, and as such, I never held good feelings for him either. If there were an opportunity, I would much rather Tian Ling oust this heir to the throne. Either Owen or Pearl would be fine. But, it seems that Tian Ling City has never had a Regent Queen before, at least to this day. Ba Huang City is a good example, but the situation is much different. Angela has no other siblings besides Luo Lin. Only she could take the throne; while Pearl has two living brothers, and it seems a stretch to kill two heirs in order to ascend....

I was actually feeling giddy at the thought of these rebellious thoughts. Perhaps I was a rebel at heart? But that was impossible, I am a loyal soldier, in mind and spirit!

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I sat down in an upright stance. Naturally, the two princes couldn’t tell what I was thinking. But, after waiting for ten minutes for something productive, I finally couldn’t sit any longer and turned around, “Your majesty, I would like to personally face the enemy. There are just too many of the Magic Sword Masters and the Stone Skin Giants. I’m worried that

my adventurer friends won't be able to hold their lines. Would your majesty please allow me to go and fight!"

The old king smiled, "Commander Li Xiao Yao is truly a brave general. In all of the empire, there isn't a single man who would go to such lengths for his soldiers and fight on the front lines! Go forth and lead your Royal Army well!"

"Thank you your majesty!"

I turned around and immediately jumped onto my horse, charging straight into the crowd of Magic Sword Masters. My achievement points needed to be high. Otherwise, the final winner of this event would be [Legend].

On the shores, I saw a group of NPCs activating a large cannon. "Peng peng peng!" Each time the cannon fired, it would blast the warships that the Hybrid Demons were riding upon. The Magic Sword Masters were instantly killed, while the Stone Skin giants had a health and defense that far surpassed the Sword Masters, allowing them to run onto the shores and clash with the players and NPCs.

In the sky, I could hear the screeches of dragons ring through the battlefield. It was Qing Luo and her Dragon Knights! There were several enormous dragons that flew over the lake. They blew their [Dragon Breath], as the knights that were mounted on them flashed their swords. The Magic Sword Masters couldn't even reach the Dragon Knights. Even their arrows couldn't breach the thick scales. The Stone Skin Giants were even more out of reach. This battle was clearly in Tian Ling Empire's favor.

"Grrrrr...."

I could hear a roar in the distance. I didn't even need to think to know that it came from the Blood Giant Kehl.

As Li Mu charged into the fray, he suddenly stiffened and looked up, "Is the Blood Giant Kehl finally arriving?"

Chapter 797: The Battle of the Broken River

The channel leading into Deer River was around a thousand meters wide, and was it very extensive. The Hybrid Demon boats were continuously floating into the lake with the tides. Both shores were constantly lit up by firelight. While we could still hear the cannons firing, they had become much less concentrated and couldn't muster the same awe that they had inspired at the beginning.

.....

"Peng!"

Another ship reached the shores. Arrows flew like rain from the [Zhan Long] archers. "Pa, pa, pa!" They fell upon the armored bow, but couldn't pierce through. Instead, the iron bow fell into the water, creating a plank for the Magic Sword Masters to rush onto land.

"Block them!"

Matcha raised her [Lion King Shield] and rushed out to the front. She swept her blade into the crowd of monsters. The Lion King Shield was holding off the attacks of the seven to ten Magic Sword Masters, but she seemed to show no fear. Under the constant attention of Darling Duck, she could hold against the attacks. Meng Yao and Yue Yao Yan, the two Moon Elves, raised their swords and charged forward, holding the front lines. We did what we could to lessen our Steel Blade Horsemen casualties. After the players died, they couldn't revive back into the event. Every Steel Blade Horseman death was a blow to our forces. I could see a fog rising up on the Deer Lake, who knows what was in store for us.

The Hybrid Demon Territory had lost the Sea Demon Tribe, and even Han Lin had been killed. They were not going to take these losses without getting something in return, and the Hybrid Demon Kings weren't that stupid. Losing those two chess pieces would only be worth it if they could get Tian Ling City out of it. That's why victory was the only option for

them.

In the sky, one of the Flame Dragon Knights raised their Dragon Spear and shouted to Lady Qing Luo, "Lieutenant Qing Luo, we've got a crisis. Ignaus is leading over ten thousand warriors and has launched an attack on Dragon City.....There's, there's even ten thousand Sword Spirit Soldiers among them. What do we do?"

Qing Luo raised her long sword and clenched her teeth. "Take three Flame Dragon Knights, three Black Dragon Knights, three Flame Dragon Knights, and return to Dragon City immediately. You must protect Dragon City. I'll hold down the fort here. Also, how is Lady Frost doing?"

The Flame Dragon Knight reported, "Lady Frost has already returned to Dragon City!"

"Alright, go then. With the lady, all will go well."

"Yes!"

.....

In the blink of an eye, ten Dragon Knights left the battlefield. Looks like I had predicted correctly. The Hybrid Demons were launching attacks on us from multiple fronts. Once Dragon City fell, Ba Huang City would become the next battlefield. After Ba Huang City, the Hybrid Demons would ride straight across the plains, cross the Zi Wu Mountains, and attack Tian Ling City. Without natural barriers like the Ice Ridge Mountains and the Sea of No Return, all of Tian Ling City would fall into the claws of the Hybrid Demons.

As before, I picked up my long sword and continued my charge through the crowd of monsters. I did all I could to minimize the damage that [Zhan Long] was taking. Time flowed by slowly. This battle was all about farming achievement points for us. The battle boats continued to sail into Deer Lake without any signs of slowing down. It seemed as though there was no end to them. On both shores, I could see both the Tian Ling City Armies and the Ba Huang City Armies. Queen Angela's encampment was set up on the other shore. Cannons exploded, releasing their attacks upon the battleships on the lake. The entire battlefield seemed to be submerged

in smoke and fog.

As I fought, I glanced through the Achievement Point Rankings. Good, my own ranking was somewhat stable

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Xiao Yao Zi Zai Achievement Points: 1014

Fang Ge Que Achievement Points: 991

Cang Yue Achievement Points: 874

Mu Xuan Achievement Points: 812

Simple Achievement Points: 791

Ye Lai Achievement Points: 765

Cang Tong Achievement Points: 755

Drunken Spear Achievement Points: 720

Jian Feng Han Achievement Points: 700

Dancing Forest Achievement Points: 699

.....

Fang Ge Que put all of his effort into protecting the Water God's Halberd, and so he was no longer gaining any more achievement points, making first place a sure bet for me. Mu Xuan and Simple had both been killed by Han Lin, and so Dong Cheng had successfully surpassed the two without a hitch. After a little bit of time, surpassing Fang Ge Que would not be a problem for her. The most astonishing part was the fact that Drunken Spear, a knight, had actually made it into the rankings. Furthermore, his points were right behind Wan Er and Ye Lai's. Who knows just how that b*st*rd managed to farm so many points. Then again, it's always been known that Drunken Spear wasn't your average player. If he didn't join [Flying Dragon] and instead chose to join [Legend], [Hero's Mound], [Zhan Long], or [Judgement], I'm afraid he would've become a famous general long ago.

But even if that were the case, Tian Ling City would always have a role

for Drunken Spear to play. That b*st*rd had willpower, determination, and an exceptionally keen sense for game play. When the time was right, no one would be able to stop Drunken Spear's progress!

In the blink of an eye, two hours passed by. [Hero's Mound], [Judgement], [Prague], and [Enemies at the Gate] had all set up camps. Everyone knew that this was the last chance for them to fight for achievement points. Nobody was willing to miss out on a chance like this.

Not long after, a messenger came riding over again and shouted, "Royal Army Commander General Li Xiao Yao, please report to the central tent!"

I fell silent. What now?

I immediately galloped straight to the central tent. I could see quite a few soldiers killing pigs and lamb for the meal. A waft of fine wines drifted from the inside. Even though we were in the middle of a bitter battle, those generals and lords were living it up in the central tent. They were even trying out some of the game in Gale Forest.

After I entered the central tent, I didn't bother to even try to wipe off some of the blood on my armor that was left by the Magic Sword Master. I walked straight over to Princess Pearl's side and stabbed my Zhen Yue Blade into the ground. Drip by drip, the fresh blood rolled onto the carpet, dying it red. This time, nobody dared to say anything. If they did, I wouldn't be able to take it any longer. But Princess Pearl might react before even I do.

王阶下，狂雷军团统领雷斯皱眉道：“陛下，呼唤臣等不知所为何事？”

Below the king's throne, Les, the General of the Thunder Army, knit his brows, "Your Majesty, what have you called us here for?"

King Rob replied, "Wait a little longer, the Ba Huang City soldiers are about to arrive!"

"Yes, Your Majesty!"

After a few minutes, light poured in as the central tents flaps were opened once again. Three of the Ba Huang City commanders walked in behind Queen Angela. These three were all Demon Harvest tier BOSSes

and looked pretty strong. I could see traces of blood on Angela's sword. This was something the Lords of Tian Ling City could never match with. The Ruler's Sword in King Rob's hand looked to be strong, but it probably hadn't been used to kill an enemy yet.

Once Angela entered, King Rob immediately stood up and invited her in. "Lady Angela has arrived, please sit!"

Ba Huang City was subservient to Tian Ling City, but they maintained their own autonomy and so King Rob needed to be courteous to Angela. Furthermore, it was Ba Huang City that provided reinforcements for this battle. That favor was enough to move King Rob's heart.

Angela sat down on the side, with her three generals standing beside her. She looked around and saw me. She couldn't help but smile and say, "So, you've already made your way to a high level officer in the military?"

I gave an awkward smile. "Yup!"

Angela looked up at the king and said, "Your Majesty, please let's get straight to the point, there are many military matters that need immediate attention!"

King Rob nodded and said, "This battle has already dragged on for a long time, and we've taken great losses to the empire's forces. But, just as before, the Hybrid Demons are coming at us in endless waves, from the Sea of No Return to Deer Lake. This is only pushing us further into a corner. I've just received news that Dragon City is also under attack. Lady Frost must be working extremely hard. And so I've decided to take on Theodore's strategy—Rapid Battle!"

"Rapid Battle?"

Angela was puzzled. "Your Majesty, what do you mean by Rapid Battle?"

King Rob replied, "Just 2.5 kilometers north of Deer Lake is a narrow river that's only 200 meters wide. And so, we are planning on building a dam there to stop the Hybrid Demon battleships' advance, stopping them just north of Deer Lake. North of the lake are two walls of granite, making it impossible to climb on land. This method would cut off their retreat. At

that moment, a number of Ba Huang City warriors will deal one quick and vigorous attack, starting with rolling boulders off the cliff, pouring hot oil into the river, and then burning their boats down!”

Angela couldn’t help but get excited. “What a clever plan!”

King Rob replied, “Seeing as you have no objections, then it’s decided. I will dispatch a troop of Flame Dragon Soldiers and Xia Yu soldiers to start building dams along the western shore. I ask that Ba Huang City’s armies also begin building up their dams to take this opportunity to punish the Hybrid Demons!”

Angela stood up and nodded. “Then, Your Majesty, I will begin preparations right now!”

“Good!”

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Now that our battle strategy was decided, I quickly headed out of the central tent and met up with the core players of [Zhan Long]. In total, [Zhan Long] only had around 5000 left. We headed north as well. More likely than not, there would be some trouble that would halt the progression of the dam. We needed to go and protect it.

All of these large armies headed north. Along the way, we could see Magic Sword Masters and Stone Skin Giants landing on the shore. Close to half an hour later, we reached the narrowest part of the river. On both banks, the NPC armies had already begun to move boulders and enormous rocks. “Peng, peng, peng!” They rolled the boulders into the water. In the blink of an eye, the Ba Huang City soldiers had created a 50-meter-long stone pile. They were also moving cannons up the hills. They were aiming the cannons straight at the warships.

“D*mm*t!”

One of the Magic Sword Masters’ lieutenants was standing at the center of a war boat. He shouted out orders: “These cowardly humans are cutting off the river to stop us from plowing straight to Tian Ling City. They’re just daydreamers! Charge onto land now and cut down those humans!”

Angela quickly reacted. “Blade Shield Division, hold them off!”

I looked over at the Steel Blade Horsemen around me and said, “Let’s go too!”

A large group of horsemen sped out and began engaging the Magic Sword Masters around the dam. With Dong Cheng and Thousand Suns providing support from afar, the Magic Sword Masters were dying in the river. Their bodies floated down the river and got caught in the rocks, making their corpses a part of the dam.

Just like that, the Hybrid Demons died in crowds. Of the entire dam, a good third of it was made up of meat. Blood flowed freely down the stream.

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“Grr!”

A roar echoed from a distance, stunning Li Mu and I. That sound was incredibly familiar. Had the Blood Giant Kehl arrived?

Chapter 798: Invasion of the Blood Giants

Dirt and rocks dropped into the center of the lake below. After an hour, a relatively unstable dam appeared. The Flame Dragon, Xia Yu, and Ba Huang City armies were already posting guards at the top. In the distance, countless Hybrid Demon war boats rammed against each other and the dam, but no matter what, they couldn't advance. The furious Magic Sword Masters all leapt off their boats to attack the human soldiers. The Stone Skin Giants that were connected to the stern of the boat lunged forward from the water and fought to dig away at the dam. Everyone's hearts tightened. How long could this dam last under the barrage from the Stone Skin Giants?

.....

"Keng!"

Angela pulled out her sword. Sunlight reflected off its blade with a flash and a Magic Sword Master's head flew into the sky. Angela examined the numerous boats that leaned against the dam and immediately ordered, "Begin pouring the oil!"

The soldiers standing at the top of the dam quickly followed orders. One after another, barrels of oil spilled over the edge under Angela's command. The hot oil slipped into the water and floated on the surface. More and more oil was spreading throughout the river. In less than five minutes, the entire surface had turned a dark black. A stinging odor wafted in the breeze, making the soldiers grimace.

Li Mu, Old K, and the other thick skinned warriors all rushed straight into the crowd and continued their charge. I forbade the [Zhan Long] players from using flame type skills for the moment, as to not to ignite the oil. Over a thousand Steel Blade Horsemen created an iron barrier at the edge of the river, giving the Stone Giants no space to move.

"Grr!"

A voice that shook the heavens and the earth resounded in the air. Within the river, an enormous beast suddenly pushed apart the boats and

burst out. It was the Blood Giant Kehl. Even this ten-meter deep river wasn't enough to submerge his body. Everything above his waist was above the surface. He carried a battle mace with a ghoulish look. Anger filled his eyes. With a single smash, he splintered a war boat and roared, "You lazy ticks! Why have you stopped moving? What can possibly stop the advance of the Hybrid Demons?"

One of the Magic Sword Master leaders walked over from the stern of the boat and knelt before Kehl. "Lord Kehl, the enemies before us have created a dam, blocking the river. Our battle boats have no way of passing through. We've been under attack from both shores, and they've got quite a few adventurers providing support. We can't break through!"

"What? You can't break through?"

Kehl's eyebrows were knit together and he suddenly grabbed the Magic Sword Master in his hand. He tightened his grip and crushed the demon, causing blood to explode out. Just like that, a Harvest Ghost tier BOSS was actually pinched to death! He brought his bloody fingers to his lips and then licked the remains as he coldly smiled, "There's nothing that can stop the advance of the Hybrid Demon army. I want no excuses. The Lord Da Lun doesn't hear any excuses. Climb ashore and kill them all! As for this dam, hehe, leave it to me!"

As he said that, Kehl suddenly rushed forward and smashed his battle mace against the dam. Looks like that b*st*rd is planning on crushing this twenty-meter-high dam all by himself?

Theodore's face froze. He gripped his long sword and muttered, "D*mm*t, the Blood Giants are here!"

Angela quickly calmed down and gave orders through clenched teeth. "Prepare the flame arrows, release!"

Right then, countless flames lit up from both shores. One after another, these fire arrows flew towards the northern side of the dam. In the blink of an eye, the entire river had turned into a sea of flames and the black oil floating on the top turned into white light. All of the boats on the surface of the lake were constructed by wood, only serving as tinder for the flame.

It was as though I were witnessing *Cao Cao when he defeated a navy of a million by burning their boats to the ground. But these Hybrid Demons really had some guts. Even though their entire bodies were being burnt to embers, they still raised their weapons and charged at the shores. They threw their weapons at their enemies before they were consumed by the fire.

* TL Note: Famous strategist in Chinese history during the Three Kingdom Period in the Battle of Chibi, or Red Cliffs.

On the front lines, I gripped my Zhen Yue Blade tightly and killed every monster that came at me. I then shouted, “There’s a burn effect! Watch your health closely, don’t get burned to death too!”

Li Mu patted down some fire on his arm. “Motherf*cker, it hurts!”

Wan Er activated her [Unyielding Spirit] and swung her daggers forward. It was as though a goddess was dancing through the monsters. The light of her skills flashed from her dagger. One after another, the Hybrid Demons fell to the ground, turning into experience and achievement points. Our beautiful vice guildmaster’s ability to kill was just too incredible—she basically could beat every other assassin player.

Dong Cheng hid behind me. She rammed her Deer Cry Staff into the ground while she conjured a [Indigo Sea Arrow] in her left hand. One after another, she shot down the Magic Sword Masters. [Indigo Sea Arrow] was an ice type attack. After suffering from both flame and ice type attacks, it only multiplied the damage dealt to the monsters. Any critical hit would easily deal over 50,000 damage. How could the Magic Sword Masters handle that? They died in droves.

Practically all of the Magic Sword Masters that managed to charge out of the water were left in critical health. As long as the players made contact with them, all of the experience went to the players. So this was a great opportunity for the [Zhan Long] players to obtain experience and achievement points. I couldn’t help but feel a surge of gratitude for my status as a commander, in this instance it had really come into use. If I didn’t get that exclusive information, then [Zhan Long] might not have

stumbled upon this incredible opportunity. [Hero's Mound], [Prague], and the others who were different from us were still at the other end of Deer Lake attempting to stop the Hybrid Demon war boats, even though the Blood Giant Kehl was over here!

Just as I thought about the Blood Giant, an enormous figure suddenly started dashing towards me. Firelight emanated from every inch of the giant's body. Kehl was essentially a flaming giant. Even the battle mace in his hand had fiery oil dripping off its edge. While he was a godly figure, the burning hot oil gave him incessant pain. The Blood Giant screeched in agony. Even so, he charged at the dam and swept out his battle mace!

”

“Peng!”

An entire group of Ba Huang City warriors were smashed into the dam!

”

Angela promptly ordered, “Turn the canons around and attack the Blood Giant!”

A dozen or so of the enormous cannons swiftly turned around. I pointed my sword forward and shouted, “Everyone stand your ground! Do not be swept away by the waves created by the impact of the canons. Once you fall, you'll be burnt to crisps!”

Everyone roared in laughter and whooped at the cannons. All of the Steel Blade Horsemen steadied their shields and dug their swords into the ground to steady their stances.

In that next moment, cannon fire sounded in continuous rounds. The shells exploded against the Blood Giant Kehl. In a blink of an eye, the Blood Giant's chest armor was smashed to smithereens. His body was just too big, and as such, dodging the cannon fire was near impossible. Furthermore, the Dragon Crystal Cannon's damaging power was just too great, and his health bar was dropped visibly.

“D*mn...”

Wan Er's cute lips were gaping as she exclaimed, "If he dies from the cannon fire, then this Blood Giant will probably be the most pitiful God tier BOSS in all of Destiny, no?"

I gave a long nod, "Yup!"

Cannon fire continued to ring out and the screams of the Blood Giant were endless. The waves that the Dragon Crystal Cannons created continuously swept over us. Thankfully, the Steel Blade Horsemen were incredibly heavy and could hold their ground. They even had heavy shields to block the advance of the Magic Sword Masters.

.....

"Grrr...."

The Blood Giant roared and rammed his battle mace against the dam. "Peng!" An enormous crack split the dam. One of the Dragon Crystal Cannons was also smashed by the blow. I could see the body parts of soldiers flying through the air. Looks like relying on the Dragon Crystal Cannons to kill the Blood Giant wouldn't be a safe bet either.

The Crown Prince Theodore's face froze. "We cannot let him continue this rampage, and we can't allow the deaths of the Ba Huang City soldiers go to waste like this. Inferno Knights, let's add some fuel to the fire!"

"Yes sir!"

A group of cavalymen from the Flame Dragon Army split off from the main group. They were clothed from head to toe in light, fiery red armor. Furthermore, each one of them carried a red bow in their hands. After placing their arrows on the string, they began to light the heads of their arrows. It looked like the arrows were also covered in poison as well. As the arrows buried themselves in the Blood Giant's skin, a purple hue began to spread out within his skin and the injuries wouldn't close up.

"Steel Crossbows!"

Second prince Owen shouted out more orders. The Xia Yu Army began pushing three enormous crossbows out. Arrows as thick as my arms flew out one after another. Furthermore, each arrow had a rope attached it at

the end. “Pu, pu, pu.” The arrows deeply pierced the Blood Giant’s body. Another group of soldiers began dragging the ropes, making the Blood Giant start to sway.

I glanced around and couldn’t help but raise a brow. The Blood Giant Kehl, a legendary warrior, was just going to die like this? That couldn’t be it, right?

Just as I predicted, and as if confirming what I was thinking, the Blood Giant Kehl roared and pulled out the steel arrows that were in his body. He glared at the group of humans and suddenly leapt up. Nobody would have imagined that he would have such momentum in his jump. With the fire from the river, he soared into the sky and landed right in the midst of the Steel Crossbows!

“Peng!”

Three of the crossbows were smashed to pieces. What was even worse was that the impact from the Blood Giant’s landing caused splash damage. An entire group of Xia Yu Army soldiers were instantly killed. The rest had their health drop drastically. It was a shocking scene!

.....

Owen immediately retreated several steps. Even so, he mustered his courage and picked up his blade. He charged forward, roaring, “Steel Net Formation! Do not be afraid, you are warriors of Tian Ling City. For the sake of our home country, what sacrifice is more fitting than our own lives?!”

“Shua!”

Owen moved incredibly fast and urged his horse to gallop straight between the Blood Giant’s legs. He swung his blade, leaving a deep mark in the giant’s legs. Unfortunately, the cut wasn’t deep enough. Otherwise, if he had cut through the tendon, the Blood Giant wouldn’t be able to stand up again.

A group of Xia Yu Army soldiers all rushed forward. The Blood Giant gave a crude smile and swung his mace, throwing a dozen or so people

into the air. At the same time, he smashed his fist into the ground, creating a surge of power that impacted about a hundred people. Dou Qi rose up all around us. Who would dare go against such a strong enemy? Even Wan Er and I had to exchange glances to confirm what we were thinking: let the NPCs fight the BOSS for now. We weren't going on this suicide mission!

Chapter 799: The Blood Giant'S Weakness

The Steel Net Formation was a type of response formation for a cavalry. It was a tactic that focused on breaking through Pike and Shield Formations. The cavalry's two branches dragged steel chains from both sides. The impressive power from the rushing battle horses would crush the Shield and Pike Formation. In this situation however, it was mostly just being used to trap the Blood Giant's movements. This way, this god level BOSS would have no choice but to take arrow and cannon shots.

In the midst of hoofbeats I could hear chains dragging against the floor, even while countless Xia Yu Army soldiers were dying. Nearly a hundred members of the cavalry wrapped each of their chains around the sides of the Blood Giant. Within moments they had him completely surrounded. "Pa, pa, pa!" The steel chains slapped against the giant's legs. This immediately invoked the god level warrior's rage. He threw a kick with his left leg, draining the health of several nearby horsemen. The BOSS' kick dragged quite a few of the cavalrymen down. Around a dozen of them were instantly dragged off their horses. Screams rang out in the sky. The reality was that a tactic like this didn't seem to affect a BOSS like Kehl very much.

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At the Ba Huang Camp, Angela leapt onto her horse and pulled out her sword. "Battle Axe squad, follow my lead! We'll target the Blood Giant's heel and cut his Achilles' tendon. Put as much strength as you can into this attack. We have to limit his movement!"

A group of horsemen followed their queen for the attack. They were unique in that each one carried a battle axe in their hands. Most battle axes had a wooden handle, making them lighter than steel blades like long blades or halberds. However, its center of gravity was centered around the blade, making it difficult to wield. Only someone with a lot of strength could fully utilize the weapon.

"Die!!"

The Blood Giant Kehl was already covered in blood, but his roars still shook the earth. Against the Ba Huang City squad, he didn't feel a sliver of fear as he faced their blitz. He suddenly took a step forward and raised his fist. He threw a ferocious punch in a downward arc, right at the center of the crowd. A dozen of the horsemen at the front were instantly crushed. There weren't even traces of their bodies left. This Blood Giant's strength was enough to completely shatter human armor and weaponry.

"What kind of an attack is that?" The corner of Li Mu's mouth twitched.

Wan Er carefully studied the BOSS and said, "Based on the system scanner, the second the Blood Giant attacks, the temperature around his fist increases to ten thousand degrees. That's why all those around it disintegrated into ashes. Even their weapons were burnt away. I wonder what kind of damage that attack does to players...."

I clenched my teeth and said, "Wouldn't they probably be immediately burned to death as well? That is, if they were instantly killed..."

Xing Lie walked up and said, "Boss, let's wait it out for a bit, at least until the BOSS is close to dying!"

"Agreed!"

.....

As such, all of the [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen and Mages alike focused on the Stone Skin Giants to farm achievement points. While we were fighting, we carefully kept an eye on the BOSS' health bar. News that the Blood Giant Kehl had appeared had already spread to the other players. Some other guilds will probably arrive soon. As such, [Zhan Long] was very limited in terms of time. Now, it was all up to Angela, Theodore, and the other NPCs to work hard.

"Ka Cha!"

Angela's sharp blade cut into the Blood Giant's legs once again. She had struck a very thick tendon. If she managed to cut through it, the Blood Giant would lose his mobility. It was clear that Kehl specialized in close combat, unlike Lanais and the others. If his tendon was cut, then he'd

probably be crippled. The only issue was that his skin was incredibly thick. Even after several attacks, no serious damage was dealt and the cuts were only skin deep.

The Ba Huang City Battle Axe Camp rushed at the BOSS in two different groups. One after another, the battle axes hacked the Blood Giant's legs. Blood would spurt out, but even those attempts resulted in failure. Rather, the attacks only served to provoke more anger from the giant. He spun around and smashed his mace downward into the crowd, leaving only a splatter of blood in its wake. At least several hundred Battle Axe soldiers were instantly killed.

After several advances, even Angela had taken some damage. I could see that on one shoulder, her armor was dyed a crimson red from the cut she had. Thankfully she had not lost her [Dou Qi Armor]. The four thousand Battle Axe Camp was now left with less than a thousand. Even though the Blood Giant specialized in close combat, all of his attacks dealt AoE damage. Furthermore, they instantly killed NPCs with just one attack. This kind of strength was not something a team of normal players could handle.

Angela quickly retreated. She was visibly shaken. "Kehl is just too strong! Theodore, Owen, what are you waiting for? Send out your most elite teams! We have to bring Kehl's head back to Tian Ling City, otherwise he will forever remain a worry for the empire!"

Theodore raised his sword and clenched his teeth. "I know! Fierce Wind Camp, charge! Let us try with the Black Steel Blades. We must kill this Blood Giant!"

Both the Flame Dragon Army and Xia Yu Army squads charged together. Thousands of soldiers dashed out from both banks. In the distance, countless Hybrid Demon boats were rushing towards us to provide support. Kehl was one of the Hybrid Demon Kings, and he was ranked tenth. I could just imagine how high his position was among the demons. Now that he was trapped here, it would be strange if the Hybrid Demon armies did nothing. Even Da Lun, Lanais, and Ignaus were probably shaking in their boots. They still needed this mighty Blood Giant to

expand their territory and become their cannon fodder!

The war boats continued pressing on closer and closer. The Ba Huang City and Tian Ling City NPCs continued pouring hot oil into the water and set the oil on fire, preventing them from getting close to the battlefield. In the end, all of the Hybrid Demons on the boats died in hoards. Naturally, after this battle, the level of the NPC soldiers rose quite a bit. Hybrid Demons gave ample amounts of experience, and there was no need to worry about leveling up while killing them.

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“Boom!”

My Zhen Yue Blade whirled through the crowd of monsters, releasing blades of wind that cut through all of them. The Magic Sword Masters died in droves. As I released the skill, I glanced over at the Blood Giant Kehl’s health; there was still 37% left!

The wait continued. We couldn’t initiate any attacks if his health was anywhere above 5%. Besides, the Blood Giant Kehl was still raging around the battlefield. Waves of blood red energy swept over the Flame Dragon and Xia Yu Armies, burning them to crisps. We weren’t going to get any benefits if we attacked him now.

“Again!”

Angela tightened her grip on her sword. Blood kept dripping down her arm onto her hilt. She had taken two critical hits to her arm and was heavily injured. Angela did not back down a single step and continued her barrage of attacks. This was a characteristic of hers that was unique compared to the two princes. Angela’s true strength far surpassed them both, and she personally lead her troops to battle. This was probably due to the fact that Frost had called her weak before. Provoked by Frost’s words, this princess fought to become a well-rounded commander. In all of Tian Ling City Empire, even Princess Pearl did not match Angela in terms of guts and strength.

“F*ck off!”

The giant now had Angela's face etched into his memory. He raised his leg and threw a heavy kick. Angela saw the attack coming and quickly reigned in her horse and surged forward with a stab. The beautiful princess dodged the Blood Giant's attack. She then flicked her blade. "Ka Cha!" She cut into the giant's other leg. "Peng!" Blood spurt out and the tendon was severed. The tendon was at least as thick as a fist. I could only imagine how much power was behind that one strike!

"Ahhhh...."

Kehl screeched and knelt to the ground on one knee. One of his legs had completely lost all mobility. Right then, another group of Battle Axe soldiers charged forward and began hacking away at the other leg. The Blood Giant let out a furious roar, but couldn't stop them from cutting away at his other tendon. Both legs were bloodied now and he could only kneel on the ground. He swung his fist around and killed another hundred people!

Angela swiftly retreated and softly said, "Archers, release your arrows! Turn the cannons, we're blasting this giant into smithereens!"

A group of NPCs all rushed forward to attack. Looks like these were the Blood Giant's final moments.

One Second Hero ran over and said, "Guildmaster, let me take some men over too. The Blood Giant's legs have weakened. This is the perfect opportunity for us to show our strength. If we don't deal any damage and the NPCs end up being the ones to deal the last blow, then the Blood Giant might not drop anything!"

I pondered for a moment and agreed, "Take 500 men and try it out. Yong Jie, you have to be careful!"

"Yes sir!"

One Second Hero quickly picked out 200 Steel Blade Horsemen and 300 other cavalry before heading straight for the BOSS. All of them released their [Blade Break]s, [Flying Sword]s, and other ranged skills. The Blood Giant was now taking heavy fire. Even that godly power that surrounded his body was being blown away. The player attacks actually dealt shield

break effects.

Right then, the cornered giant made his resolve and began fighting back. Kneeling on the ground, the giant let out a deafening roar. He pounded his fists into the ground and a crimson light burst from his body. Yong Jie was leading the charge. “Peng!” His shield nearly shattered from the attack and he instantly lost over 60,000 health. He was almost killed in one hit. Close to a hundred [Zhan Long] players, including quite a few Steel Blade Horsemen, had been killed in that one blow. The NPCs were no better off and met the same fate. Even the equipment they dropped were obliterated!

I felt my heart grow cold and I shouted, “Come back! Don’t go!”

.....

One Second Hero also understood the gravity of his mistake and the consequences it placed on his team. Full of guilt, he said, “F*ck it all, I never would have imagined that the Blood Giant would still have so much strength. We can’t kill him...”

I comforted him. “Let’s just wait and see for now. We’ll get our chance soon.”

Right then, I heard a dragon’s screech in the air. Qing Luo led four Dragon Knights in our direction. Riding on the Crystal Dragon, she looked down at the Blood Dragon and shouted, “Queen Angela, do not underestimate your enemy. The Blood Giant Kehl has survived in the abyss for tens of thousands of years. His body has long absorbed the abyss’ destructive power. The only way to kill this b*st*rd is to destroy his pouch. Otherwise... I’m afraid we’d have to sacrifice many more brave warriors to kill him!”

Angela clenched her teeth and said, “Cavalry, cover for me!”

.....

A group from the Ba Huang City cavalry charged straight for the BOSS while Angela knelt down and began summoning a fiery light. Dou Qi began to rise up from under her feet and began snaking their way towards the Blood Giant’s back. While the BOSS was focused on killing others, she

surged right at his back.

Chapter 800: Blood Giant'S Battleaxe

“Charge!”

Angela landed right on the Blood Giant's back, lunged forward with her sword directly towards the monster. The Blood Giant seemed to instinctively realize that something was happening and immediately began swinging his body from side to side. “Pa!” Angela's blade missed its target and only sliced some of the Blood Giant's skin. She did not manage to cut past the body's protective shield. The Blood Giant suddenly countered and threw his fist towards his back!

“Peng!”

Angela parried the blow with her blade just in time. The backfire threw her into a dike. Her pure white battle robe was now stained with blood and mud. She coughed a wad of blood into her hand as she slowly got up. Owen couldn't help but shout, “Queen Angela, please don't go in again. Even if we have to sacrifice thousands of soldiers, we can't allow you to sacrifice yourself while killing the Blood Giant!”

Her face was quickly twisted with bitter pain. She looked back towards the Ba Huang City soldiers behind her. It was clear she couldn't bear to let them sacrifice their lives.

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I picked up my Zhen Yue Blade and walked over. I looked up at Qing Luo and shouted, “Lieutenant Qing Luo!”

Qing Luo looked over at me with a smile, “Lord Dragon Knight, what is your command?”

I replied calmly, “Do you have any way of trapping the Blood Giant's upper body? At least so that he doesn't struggle too much? I want to try and see if I can break that Abyssal Tumor!”

Qing Luo pursed her lips, “Hmm... My Dragon Knights and I can try it out, but we don't have very much time. We can keep him trapped for one minute at most. My lord, you have to be careful. If the situation looks bad,

you can't force yourself. If anything happens to you, Lady Frost will be very upset..."

"I know, let's go!"

"Okay!"

On the ground, a group of Ba Huang City and Tian Ling City soldiers rushed into the fray. Canons exploded one after another. The Blood Giant was practically hidden in the thick smoke. The furious cries continued. As a god tier BOSS, he had pride and dignity that he needed to fight for. He would not give up easily.

Qing Luo and four other Dragon Knights were in the middle of a discussion. Soon after they quickly dispersed, creating a pentagonal formation. Qing Luo pulled out a long chain from her bag. At the end of the chain was a sharp awl. She looked over at the giant and said, "Is everyone ready?"

The Dragon Knights all nodded, "Yes, Lieutenant!"

"Let's begin!"

Qing Luo leapt up into the sky and threw all of her weight into the ground. "Peng!" She dove straight towards the earth and buried the awl deep into the ground. A screech rang through the air and several other Dragon Riders also threw themselves towards the ground. Qing Luo shouted, "Disperse, begin flying out and trapping this giant!"

All of the soldiers on the ground spread out while five of the Dragon Riders began flying in circles. One end of the chain was tied to the saddle on the back of the dragon. They circled the Blood Giant's body round and round. After ten turns, the five dragons flapped their powerful wings to keep the giant locked in place. The giant roared, "You cowardly cheats. I will smash you to bits!"

Unfortunately, no matter how much the giant struggled, he couldn't break free of the chains. Even so, he was clearly straining the dragons as they swayed with his movements.

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I immediately charged forward and swung my Zhen Yue Blade, activating [Zhen Yue's Battle Song]. The buff gave me a boost in attack power. Right as I got close to the giant, I leapt off my horse. Kicking off of the Blood Giant's back, I rushed up towards his shoulders and hacked away at his back. "Peng, peng!" Sparks flew. Its back was as hard as rock, making it impossible to cut through.

I started to panic and began activating a combo: [Strength of a Thousand Men]+[Combo]. I threw out ten strikes in that instant. I dealt a shallow gash into the Blood Giant's back, but it wasn't deep enough just yet. The remaining layer was as thick as dragonskin. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't cut through!

In the distance, Qing Qian shouted to me, "Brother Xiao Yao, careful!"

Everyone was waiting on me. I didn't have much time left either. After feeling the bite of my sword, the Blood Giant went into a frenzy. Godly power began emanating from every inch of his body. Qing Luo and the Dragon Riders weren't much better off either. A deep gash opened up on the dragons' backs from the chaotic struggle. Blood started flowing down their backs and the dragons wailed into the sky.

After retreating several steps, I dashed forward and swung my blade, yelling, "Move!"

"Pa Cha!" Lightning flashed and I activated the [Thundering Heavens] skill. Purple lightning lit up the sky. The phenomenon was a beautiful sight to see. All of the players of [Zhan Long] let out a gasp as the scenery played out before them. Even the NPCs like Angela, Owen, and Theodore were dumbfounded.

"I never would have thought that Commander Li Xiao Yao would have such godly power...." Pearl exclaimed with a smile.

The old king nodded, "Commander Li Xiao Yao is truly a talented asset for the empire..."

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After [Thundering Heavens] dealt its wrath, I charged straight through

the net of lightning with my sword in hand and threw another slash. This time, it had an effect. “Pa!” The thick layer of skin finally split apart. Right underneath the flesh was a red tumor. This was the source of the Blood Giant’s Abyssal Power.

“Keng!”

I unsheathed my Dragon Reservoir Sword. With both swords in hand, I pierced the tumor. “Ka Cha!” It broke. A fierce whirlwind rose up as all of the power escaped. I felt a hot wind suddenly hit my face and chest. I was thrown backwards into the air. When I hit the ground I had less than 10,000 health. Wan Er quickly sprinted over to help me up, “Healers!”

Several healers spammed [Heal]s on me. I looked down at my chest. My Hidden Dragon Armor had actually melted from the hit. Wasn’t this Abyssal Power a little too OP?

I looked up and saw the Blood Giant Kehl sitting on his knees and howling. Steam was continuously rising from his back as the Abyssal Power kept flowing out. For him, this was an extremely painful process. The power escaping from his back must have felt like a hot arrow which soon dyed the sky red. It was also a signal to the Hybrid Demon Army of complete defeat.

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In the sky, Qing Luo gave orders: “Cut the lines, our mission is complete!”

Once the chains were cut, the Blood Giant regained its freedom, but that was of no consequence. He had less than 7% of his health left now. Breaking the Abyssal Tumor was a critical hit. His enormous body was motionless now. He didn’t even have the will to fight back. I quickly stood up, summoned my Flying Scythe Horse, and shouted, “While everyone still has the [Zhen Yue Battlesong] buff, charge! Kill the Blood Giant. Matcha, activate [Lion King Shield]!”

“Yes sir!”

In that moment, both country weapon buffs were active. Everyone

lurched towards the BOSS. Kehl looked up and met my eyes. He had conceded to his fate!

I did not leave any mercy and dealt a barrage of attacks onto his body. Along with the support from the Steel Blade Horsemen and ranged players, Kehl's health quickly depleted.

"[Vanguard] and [Hero's Mound] players are almost here!"

Li Mu smiled as he fought, "But it's too late already. This Blood Giant is [Zhan Long]'s!"

Once the Blood Giant's health fell to 0.5%, everyone halted their attacks. Wang Jian shouted, "Brother Xiao Yao, kill the Blood Giant and take credit for your work!"

I didn't argue and dealt the last set of blows. Soon, the Blood Giant let out one last wailing scream and died!

"Ding!"

System Notification: Congratulations player [Xiao Yao Zi Zai] for killing the Hybrid Demon King [Blood Giant Kehl], you have received the award: Level+3, Charm+100, your reputation in the empire has risen, and Achievement Points+400!

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My level swiftly flew up to 150. I could take on the Sixth Class Advancement. Aside from that, I received another 100 Charms and in terms of Achievement Points I was safely number one in Tian Ling City. All that aside, what was left was to see was just what kind of equipment the Blood Giant had dropped.

I walked up and found the equipment he dropped just below the body. There was a total of three pieces. While there weren't many, they each looked to be meticulously made. One was a battleaxe that glowed with a holy light. It looked incredibly fierce and had a rough edge to its style. Despite its unmannered form, it had very intricate designs along the blade. The other piece of equipment was a red chest plate. A beautiful light continuously rotated around the armor. The final piece of equipment

looked to be a simple ring. I first looked at the battle axe. I was most excited for the stats on this one. When I waved my hand over it, everyone was stunned—

[Blood Giant's Battleaxe] (Deity Artifact - Superior)

Attack: 7100-8800

Strength: +250

Stamina: +245

Agility: +244

Magic: +240

Additional: Increases the user's attack power by 150%

Additional: Ignores 25% of the target's defense

Additional: While attacking, all targets within 10 yards will receive 25% Splash Damage

Special: [Abyssal Power] Increases damage on heavy armor classes by 50%

Special: [Fury of Kehl], greatly increases the user's defense, attack, and attack speed. Duration: 120 seconds. Consumes 100 Rage Points

Required Level: 145

Required Charm: 250

Required Class: Berserker

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Raising the Blood Giant's Battleaxe, I said, "A Deity Artifact. How about the three berserkers with the most damage ROLL for it?"

Old K, Dong Cheng, and Bai Qi were the top three. They immediately began the process. In the end, Old K's luck spontaneously exploded. Usually he'd roll a sh*t number and had to use his connections to get the equipment he wanted, but this was the first time he'd won first place and it was actually for a Deity Artifact. What a miracle.

Holding the Blood Giant's Axe, Old K bragged, "So this is ranked third among the strongest weapons!"

I nodded, "Yup, the Chinese server only has the Zhen Yue Blade and Water God's Halberd that were ranked above your Blood Giant's Battleaxe. It's an awesome weapon. With that ten yards of splash damage, just one sweep of the axe is enough to create a bloodbath. It's come just in time too, right before the Country Battles."

"Right."

Li Mu added, "Did anyone manage to get the Water God's Halberd stats?"

Wan Er quickly replied, "It's very similar to the Blood Giant's Battleaxe. It's a weapon that is attack-oriented. With every strike, there's a 100% chance of dealing a [Halberd Wind] attack to the enemies in the vicinity."

"Alright, that is awesome...."

Chapter 801: Zhan Long Ring

I continued on to the next piece of equipment. Besides the battleaxe, the Blood Giant had also dropped a dark red chestplate. A saintly glow emanated from the armor and it looked to be incredibly durable. I held it in my hand and felt the power seeping into my hand. I took a peek at the stats. Motherf*cker, this might actually be stronger than my Hidden Dragon Armor—

[Blood Giant's Chestplate] (Demon Harvest)

Type: Heavy

Defense: 2450

Strength: +175

Stamina: +172

Agility: +170

Magic: +165

Additional: Increases the user's Defense Power by 70%

Additional: Increase the user's Attack Power by 30%

Additional: Increases the user's Max HP by 7000

Special: [Shield of Ruin], when the user's health falls below 40%, the armor will automatically activate [Shield of Ruin]. Its durability is proportional to the user's attack power. Duration: 10 seconds, Cooldown: 20 seconds

Special: Demon Harvest No. 1029

Required Level: 145

Required Charm: 200

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With the Blood Giant's chest plate in hand, I said, "The [Shield of Ruin] effect is just about as godly as the [Twin Dragon] effect on my Violet Heavens Cloak. Alright, the ten Heavy type players who dealt the most

damage to the BOSS, please ROLL!!”

With the dice in hand, I felt as though the world was at my feet. I smiled confidently, “Let’s roll, I will never lose this to another person!”

“7 ! ”

The beautiful number popped into the air. Right then, Li Mu, Wang Jian, and Old K both broke into laughter. Afterwards, those b*st*rds all rolled, but not a single one of them rolled a number over 50. In the end, the chestplate went to Bai Qi.

The last piece of equipment was a ring. The ring’s decorations were very unique. There were two long swords that pierced through a western dragon’s head engraved into the side. The dragon seemed to carry a red hue as well and almost looked alive. The two swords were also intricately designed. I felt my heart skip a beat and I couldn’t tear my eyes away from the design. After a few seconds, I smiled, “This ring truly lives up to [Zhan Long]’s name....”

Li Mu gaped at it, “Come on, you have all the time in the world to think about its name, hurry up and look at the stats!”

I hid a smile and waved my hand over it. The ring’s stats immediately appeared before everyone. The name immediately gathered the most attention. It truly was related to [Zhan Long]. The stats were even more incredible—

[Zhan Long Ring] (Deity Tier)

Strength: +290

Stamina: +285

Agility: +270

Magic: +266

Additional: Increases the user’s physical attack power by 37%

Additional: Increases the user’s Max HP by 12000

Additional: Increases damage dealt by sword type skills by 30%

Special: [Strength of Zhan Long], increases the user's base attack by 3000 points and attack speed by 40%

Special: [Full Guard], Increases the user's detection skills, allows the user to stealthily investigate any target within 10 yards

Required Level: 150

Required Charm: 300

Required Class: Swordsman

.....

My hand shook with excitement as I read the stats. I closed my hand over the Zhan Long Ring and trembled with enthusiasm, "You didn't see nothing, let's all go back to the city and get some rest, everybody must be tired, hahaha...."

Li Mu's eyes immediately lit up, "You f*cker, you are the most shameless guildmaster. Your skills at stealing equipment is just too LOW. Give up and set up the ROLL!"

Meng Yao wiped a tear away from laughing and said, "Brother, stop making us laugh, that's such a low joke!"

I replied, "Alright, if you want to ROLL, then let's ROLL. I'm telling you right now, I'm fighting with all I've got!"

Wan Er said, "This ring requires a Level 150 user. Logically speaking, this pig here is the only one who can equip it. On top of that, it requires 300 points in Charm. Based on our guild's equipment guidelines, anyone who's 5 levels below the requirement or has 10% less than the Charm requirement must give up their right to ROLL. Now, I'm not being biased towards the pig, but how about having all the swordsmen players under level 145 or players that have less than 270 Charm points give up on the Zhan Long Ring? What does everyone else think?"

Wang Jian shook his head, "I'm just under the level requirement..."

Old K and Bai Qi all indicated that their Charm was below the standard. Matcha, Yao Yan, and the others didn't have the right class. Finally, there

was only one other male in all of [Zhan Long] who could go against me, and that was the No. 1 in the Valiant Bravery Camp, Li Mu!

Wang Jian narrowed his eyes and said, “Is this the ultimate luck battle between the Zhan Long Camp and the Valiant Bravery Camp?”

Li Mu’s lips twitched, “After winning that Hero’s Helm, you’ve used up all your luck. Why don’t you just accept fate now? That Zhan Long Ring is going to me. Too bad the name isn’t too fitting, how great would it be if it were called the Valiant Bravery Ring....”

I crossed my arms across my chest and said, “Let’s ROLL. Maybe I’ll have used up my luck, but Li Mu, you’ve never had much luck to begin with....”

Li Mu glared at me, “Now you’re just tarnishing my good name. Alright then, let me show you just how great my Charm is!”

The dice flew out and after rolling a few times, the result drew a smile on everyone’s faces, 3 points!

I picked up the dice and threw it out. 9 points. Even if I had used up all of my luck, it was still enough to completely overpower that b*st*rd!

Li Mu clenched his Neptune’s Blade with a painful expression hung over his face. He looked at Wang Jian, “Is my luck really that bad?”

Wang Jian nodded, “Just the other day, when you were driving in reverse, you drove right into the ditch. Then, yesterday, that daffodil you were growing was eaten by a dog. And just this morning, you managed to plug our toilet. Have you forgotten about all of that?”

I was stunned, “Do dogs even eat grass?”

“That’s what I’m saying! Boss’s luck is truly one of a kind! Think about it, why else would he be single at this age?”

“Pitiful. Truly pitiful!”

“That’s right!”

While I was sympathetic, that did not overpower my desire for the ring. I quickly equipped the Zhan Long Ring and switched out my Undefeated Ring. Right then, all of my stats increased exponentially—especially my

attack power. That ring increased my base attack by 3000 points. I felt like I was on par with a god. I could safely say that the me right now with this Zhan Long Ring didn't have a single defense in existence that I couldn't break—

[Xiao Yao Zi Zai] (Dragon Knight)

Level: 150

Attack: 19274-23265

Defense: 12302

Health: 88455

Magic: 17430

Charm: 783

CBN Battlenet Ranking: 6

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Based on rough estimates, my equipment increased my stats by about 480%, while my skills added another 70%. Now, with my 23000 base attack, my actual attack power was already over 15000. Besides top level BOSSes, I could deal around 20,000 damage to almost any other class. Furthermore, the Zhan Long Ring increases damage dealt by sword skills by 30%, which is about 26,000 damage. As long as I can get close, even I can instantly kill Fang Ge Que.

I happily stood there, marveling at my stats. Right then, I heard another bell from the System—

“Ding!”

System Notification: Congratulations players of Tian Ling City. This invasion by the Hybrid Demon Army has been successfully pushed back due to everyone's hard work. Tian Ling City is once again in peace. The ten players with the most achievement points are: Xiao Yao Zi Zai, Cang Yue, Fang Ge Que, Ye Lai, Cang Tong, Drunken Spear, Q-Sword, Mu Xuan, Simple, and Dancing Forest. Tomorrow at noon, a feast will be held in the Tian Ling City Palace. At that time, everyone will receive their rewards. All

other players will immediately receive their rewards!

.....

Right then, Li Mu, Wang Jian, and Qing Qian all received notifications in their inboxes. On the other hand, the top ten players would have to wait until noon tomorrow to receive theirs. Who knows what tricks the developers have up their sleeves.

This time I was finally logging off. After playing for 24 hours straight, I was about to collapse from exhaustion.

Log off!

I walked out of the room and went downstairs to eat a simple meal with Wan Er and Dong Cheng. Afterwards, I gave Wan Er a kiss on the cheek and went to wash up to get ready for bed.

I could feel the Qi in my body slowly circulating. After staying online for so long once again, my strength seemed to have increased to another level. This only further confirmed my suspicions: A game like Destiny really had the effect of increasing the capacity of my consciousness. Otherwise, I wouldn't have advanced with the days going by at this rate. I couldn't tell if Tang Qi could also feel this effect or if I was the only one who had advanced in the game.

I slept peacefully that night and woke up well rested the next morning. By the time I woke up, the sun's rays shone into my room, giving off a warm feeling.

After I got out of bed, I ate brunch with Wan Er and Dong Cheng. It was time to log on and receive our rewards.

.....

“Shua!”

We appeared at the center of Tian Ling City at 11:30 in the morning. I took the chance to repair my equipment and replenish some of the necessary items in my bag. Afterwards, I summoned my Flying Scythe Horse. There was still some time left for me to check in on the Royal Army

camp.

When I walked into the camp, two rows of soldiers were lined up on both sides of the gate as they greeted me. “Lord Commander!”

I walked straight through. Morning practice already begun on the training grounds, but the decrease in our numbers was incredibly noticeable. Some of the men were even injured. As for the soldiers who were missing arms or legs and couldn’t fight were arranged in the back. Han Yuan walked his horse forward and said, “General, you’ve arrived!”

I gave a nod, “Will you tell me about our numbers after the war?”

Han Yuan replied, “Yes sir! We took heavy losses after this battle. Currently, of the soldiers who are capable of fighting, we have a total of fourteen thousand. Then there are several hundred who are injured and cannot participate in battle. As such, we’ve arranged for them to help out in the kitchen and supply wagons. But Princess Pearl has already consented to supplying more soldiers for the Royal Army.”

I smiled, “Great. The palace feast is about to start soon. You, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Ye, would you like to join me?”

“Yes sir!”

A surprised smile came over Han Yuan’s face. Currently, he was only a lieutenant and was the top ranked officer in charge of a camp. The reality was that he had very little chances of participating in a Royal Feast. In a way, this had to be some kind of honor for him, right?

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When I brought the four generals of the Royal Army to the palace, all we could see was an endless line of palace maids. All of them were carrying plates of fruit, delicacies, and all kinds of rare dishes. Xiao Lie and Han Yuan’s eyes nearly rolled out of their sockets from the scene. Long Xing and Xia Lie on the other hand had both been generals in the Flame Dragon Army, which had given them more exposure to these types of events. As such, they weren’t quite as shocked as the other two. But I could still see a smile playing on their lips. While Han Yuan and the

others were ranked below them in terms of strength, Han Yuan was a veteran of a hundred battles. Even if Long Xing and Xia Lie teamed up, they wouldn't necessarily be able to win against him.

Stepping on the red carpet, I walked into the great hall of the palace. Each step I took gave me a nauseous feeling. The carpet served only to remind me of the bloody battlefield I stood on just a day ago. But that was the reality of the world. After experiencing enough, I had come to accept it as it was.

A crowd of officials and ministers were chattering away in the great hall. There were even some players mixed in. Fang Ge Que, Q-Sword, and Ye Lai had all arrived. Wan Er and Dong Cheng both walked over to greet me with a smile, "Why'd you get here so late?"

I responded matter of factly, "I went to handle some matters with the Royal Army. Have they distributed the rewards yet?"

"Nope nope, let's hurry over!"

Wan Er grabbed my hand and pulled me into the great hall. We finally stopped beside the throne. There was a group of players already waiting for the reward. Everyone whispered to one another, speculating on what the king was going to give us.

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"What do you guys think? What kind of reward will it be?" Q-Sword asked with a smile.

Jian Feng Han replied simply, "Don't worry, he's not going to promise Princess Pearl to you, that's for sure!"

Q-Sword was speechless.

Chapter 802: General of the South

After a while, battle drums began to echo down the great hall. King Rob slowly stood up from his throne and projected his voice, "Generals of Tian Ling City, adventurers from all over the world, thanks to your fierce fight to the death, Tian Ling City has finally killed the two Demons, Han Lin and Kehl and has pushed back the invasions upon the city. Today's feast is to thank you for your sacrifices. Drink and eat to your heart's content!"

A crowd of players were waiting around for their rewards while the governors and officials ran up to the king to congratulate him. It was an incredibly competitive atmosphere as NPCs and players pushed and shoved each other to get their time with the king, hoping he would give them a higher position in this cheerful mood.

.....

Theodore's arm was wrapped in a bandage, some blood seemed to have seeped through. He had gotten the injury during the fight with the Blood Giant. He looked up at the king and said, "Father, these adventurers are still waiting for your reward!"

King Rob nodded and said, "Heroes, come forth. I will give each of you your rewards now!"

Dancing Forest, Simple, and Q-Sword all stepped forward. There were two kinds of system rewards: one was a job promotion, and the other came in the form of levels, equipment, and Charm. A few seconds later, the result was revealed. Wan Er received a Deity Tier cape while Dong Cheng received a pair of Demon Harvest Magic shoes. Dancing Forest's luck was pretty good and she got a Deity Tier longbow. This time, her attack power was going to be pretty incredible.

After Q-Sword and Ye Lai received their rewards, they gave a curt goodbye and turned to leave.

"Well then, what about you?" King Rob looked over at Fang Ge Que.

Fang Ge Que replied, "I would like my military achievements to be

recognized by the kingdom!”

King Rob said, “You are a general under my son, Theodore. I’ll let him give you the reward!”

Theodore leaned against his sword and stood up, “Youngster, you’re very brave in battle. Now I will promote you to a Second Cavalry Officer with a Lieutenant’s salary and the leadership of the 3rd Regiment of the Long Spears. How does that sound?”

Fang Ge Que smiled, “Thank you your highness!”

After receiving the promotion, Fang Ge Que also turned to leave. Looks like he wasn’t very interested in any of the other things. On the other hand, Wan Er and Dong Cheng were still waiting for their rewards.

Drunken Spear stood all by himself with his spear in hand. He was the only one in his guild, [Flying Dragon], to have made it into the Top 20. As if to single him out, the old king pointed directly at Drunken Spear and said, “Hero who hails from the Demon World, what kind of reward would you like?”

Drunken Spear grunted, “I would like to climb to a higher position in the military!”

King Rob looked at him for a long time before giving his final verdict, “You’ve made quite a contribution to this battle, if that is what you wish for.... There is a difficult task I have in mind. Do you have the courage to take it on?”

Drunken Spear’s face lit up, “Your majesty, please continue!”

King Rob smiled at his enthusiasm, “Of the empire’s dozens of armies, the Harvest Army was nearly annihilated. An army of 40,000 was decimated until only a few survivors were left. Even Commander Klein died a heroic death in the midst of battle. The Harvest Army still has its place within the empire, and around seven hundred men have returned to its call. As such, I hope that someone will take on the responsibility of becoming the Harvest Army’s commander and will rebuild it to its former glory. Are you willing to take this position? I will be straightforward, the

Harvest Army does not have much priority when it comes to recruiting, and furthermore, after this restructuring, the Harvest Army will become a branch under the Xia Yu Army. Only after it grows and develops will it become independent. Are you still willing?"

Drunken Spear nodded without hesitation, "I am!"

"Good!"

King Rob raised his goblet and smiled, "If that is the case, then let me send you off on this task with this glass!"

Drunken Spear immediately took the goblet and gulped it down. He then left the palace to meet the straggling army. It seems like he has taken a path similar to mine. But the reality was, Drunken Spear's path was much more difficult than the one I took. Almost all of the original soldiers in the Harvest Army were either dead or disabled. Additionally, since it was subservient to the Xia Yu Army, and because the Xia Yu Army was second in the nation, there was undoubtedly some underhanded dealings that the Harvest Army would inevitably become embroiled in. If Drunken Spear really brings up the Harvest Army from within the Xia Yu Army, then that would truly be quite the feat.

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That was when the king looked over to me and smiled, "Commander Li Xiao Yao, in this battle, both your leadership and courage have impressed me. There were many instances where the Demon Army was pushed back when you were in command. Not to mention the fact that you personally killed the Blood Giant Kehl yourself. You outshone many in this battle. Tell me, what kind of reward would you like? Ask me anything!"

I looked around and saw that the generals and officials were all looking at me and there was no lack of jealousy and envy. But, there was no other way. I had climbed the ranks in the empire too quickly. Under my command, the Royal Army's troop of weaklings had suddenly turned become one of the main forces. Rather, I would be suspicious if those senior generals did not show the least bit of dislike towards me.

I stepped forward and looked up at the old king, "The Royal Army has

taken too many losses from this battle. I ask that your majesty replenish our forces, along with our supplies and weapons. More importantly, we'll also need to replenish our battle machines!"

"Anything in addition to that?" King Rob asked.

I pondered for a moment before replying, "In addition, I hope that your majesty will allow the Royal Army to open up a new camp outside the city. The camp we have within the city is too small and can hold at most twenty thousand men. Right now, the Royal Army is most in need of battle power, and a mere force of twenty thousand is not nearly enough."

King Rob couldn't help but smile cheerfully, "If it isn't so. Alright then, I will grant all of those requests. Within the next few days, the Moon Blade Forest just southwest of Tian Ling City will be opened up for you. Furthermore, a million gold pieces will be budgeted to you for the Royal Army to begin building a new campground. The Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army both lost over seventy percent of their forces and the two commanders were unfortunately killed in action. How about having the remaining soldiers of the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army be reassigned to the Royal Army?"

Pearl excitedly bumped my shoulder beside me and said, "Why aren't you thanking his majesty yet?"

I was stunned, "What?"

Pearl replied, "The Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army were originally long time veterans of Tian Ling City. While their numbers are few, they are all experienced elite soldiers. Even after losing seventy percent of their forces, they still have ten thousand men left. What do you think?"

Surprised, I said, "Thank you your majesty!"

King Rob continued, "You're welcome. After all, the Royal Army has worked hard on behalf of the empire. Rebuilding it has been a concern of mine from the beginning. Now that General Li has built it into a strong force, you have laid those worries to rest!"

King Rob coughed a few times and clearly pronounced, "This announcement will take immediate effect. General Li Xiao Yao has now been promoted as the General of the South and is ranked as a Fourth Tier Commander. He will be in command of the entire Royal Army, and will have full power to deploy the troops. If the Royal Army ever suffers any resistance, Li Xiao Yao may use the General of the South badge to deploy any army from the empire. All commanders must obey!"

I stiffened. Pearl was nearly jumping with joy. The king's order this time was truly generous. He was actually giving me the permission to use any of the armies in the empire. Based on the ancient military system, the only person with that kind of power was the field marshal. To think that I, a small General of the South, would actually be given the same kind of treatment was unbelievable. Looks like King Rob truly valued the service from Pearl and I.

An imperial bodyguard stepped forward and presented a crimson badge, "General Li, do you accept the badge of the General of the South and the official seal?"

I bowed my head and accepted the two items. The badge for the General of the South was slightly heavier than my original General badge. Furthermore, the workmanship of the new badge was much more detailed and intricate. Truthfully, my heart was secretly leaping with joy. Based on the tiering system in the Tian Ling City empire, a General was a sixth tier official, while a General of the South was a fourth tier official. I had risen two tiers with this one promotion.

"Ding!"

System Notification: Congratulations, you have demonstrated outstanding military achievement at the Battle of the Sea of No Return and have received 1,000 Achievement points. Furthermore, you have received the following rewards: Level+1, Charm+50, Gold+100,000!

.....

Now that was the real system reward. Perhaps my level was already getting too high, and so the system was only granting one level to me. But

that was still just fine. At Level 151, I could advance to the next class!

The king looked at me and said, "General Li, I hope that you will not betray the faith that we have put upon you and continue to work hard for the empire!"

I nodded, "I shall."

Pearl smiled, "The Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army are both waiting for you outside the city. How about you bring your men over to welcome them? Additionally, preparations are already being made for the supplies to be sent out. They will be sent at first notice to the Royal Army. Do not worry, the man making the preparations is one of my mine, he will not make a mistake."

I smiled, "Thank you!"

While my heart was set on the issue of advancing from the sixth class, I knew that I needed to handle the Royal Army matters first. After all, it was much more important. The Royal Army was now accepting two military forces, and had suddenly grown into a 40,000 man army. With patience and training, this group could soon become an exceptional godlike army that will sweep the seven continents!

Wan Er and Dong Cheng both left to grind levels. They both were young girls anyway and didn't find much interest in matters like training troops. Otherwise, they would have done the same as Fang Ge Que and Drunken Spear and would have asked for a military position as their reward rather than equipment and levels. However, the rewards that they received had pushed the two girls close to Level 150. They were probably grinding to hit the Level 150 requirement for the sixth class advancement. At this point, no players had reached that frontier. Who knows what kind of new skills were available at the sixth class advancement. Anticipation filled the air.

.....

Outside Tian Ling City, there were players were all over the place. I followed Pearl into the Moon Blade Forest. From a distance, I could already see the soldiers lined up in neat rows in a clearing. It was the soldiers from the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army. Their armor

was still bloody from the previous battle. Many of their garments were torn or tattered. However, there weren't any injured soldiers. Those that were injured had most likely been sent back home.

All of the soldiers were whispering to one another and were clearly anxious. The commanders of the two armies had died in battle, and nobody knew about the fate of their army. This kind of uneasiness was to be expected.

“Silence! Her highness, Princess Pearl, has arrived!”

The messenger called out from his horse as he rode into the clearing and everyone quieted down.

Chapter 803: Ancient Hidden Technique

Pearl walked her battle horse onto a mound so that all of the soldiers could see her. I quickly followed behind with my Zhen Yue Blade in hand and my Dragon Reservoir Sword on my back. The General of the South badge was absorbed by the system and it reappeared on my arm sleeve. Just the presence of the badge was enough to command respect from the NPCs behind me. The military rule in the empire was very structured and any actions that could be construed as a rebellion against higher authority could result in a beheading. Their anxiety around me was well within predictions.

.....

Pearl raised her pale hand and shouted, "Soldiers of the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army, my father has seen your courage and bravery in the Battle of the Sea of No Return and bears the loss of your two commanders deep in his heart. However, the Hybrid Demon threat has not been eliminated and the borders of Tian Ling City become more and more dangerous by the day. We cannot expend all of our efforts on the dead for we must make preparations to defend against an invasion at any moment and protect our homeland. Today, my father has decreed that the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army shall be assigned under the flag of the Royal Army!"

Her announcement created an uproar among the soldiers. The Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army were both individual standing armies within the army. Being told all of a sudden that their units were essentially disbanded and restructured under a different flag was a dishonor that nobody would be willing to accept. Every military man had his dignity and pride in the unit he served and being drafted to another unit would create waves in a man's heart. This was something I had been considering previously. I was also a military man after all and that dignity and pride was even more important than my own life.

Among the crowd, a lieutenant walked forward and said, "Your highness, we.... it's not that we aren't willing to follow his majesty's order.

However.... however, the Magic Flame Army still has 15,000 strong men. Why can't we remain independent? We... we will restore our former glory, I promise you that! Please, your highness, could you speak on our behalf to his majesty? I beg of you!"

As soon as he finished, the lieutenant fell to his knees. All of the people behind him followed suit. My heart sank. It looks like incorporating these two armies may have sounded easy, but earning their respect and service would be a far more difficult task.

Even if Pearl was a woman of strategy, she seemed to be caught in a hard decision. She nonetheless was a young princess, not even the age of twenty. How could she predict every possibility? She had most likely never imagined a scenario like this to happen. And so Pearl looked over at me. Finally she introduced me in a loud voice: "The man beside me is the commander of the Royal Army. The new General of the South, Li Xiao Yao. In the future, he will be your commander. If you have any grievances, tell him!"

I was at a loss. Finally, I said, "Lieutenant, please stand up, you are a military man of the empire!"

The lieutenant hesitantly stood up. I could see markings of blood all over his face. With his broken sword in hand, he said, "Commander Li Xiao Yao, your achievements with the Royal Army are truly impressive and I respect your bravery, however.... I am incompetent, I truly cannot watch the Magic Flame Army disappear like this. If Commander Jupiter knew of this, he would be rolling in his grave. The Magic Flame Army is his life's work. Soldiers of the Magic Flame Army, do you agree?"

All of the men shouted in agreement. Looks like while the lieutenant was not very high ranked in the army, he commanded a lot of respect among the men.

Without reason, I could feel frustration building in my heart. Getting these men to follow me was too difficult a task.

I slid off my horse and stood before the soldiers. I looked at the wounded men and knelt on one knee. "Ka Cha!" My Zhen Yue Blade crushed a rock

and I buried the blade deep into the center. That one move was enough to shock all 30,000 of the empire's soldiers. The lieutenant was terrified, "Commander, you... you've put us in a hard place! Hurry, please stand up. We cannot accept this kind of ceremony!"

I looked up at him and said, "I am not kneeling before you, I am kneeling before the dead of the Magic Flame and the Star Rifle Armies. I, Li Xiao Yao, vow that from this day forth, the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army's flags will never disappear. The Royal Army will create a Magic Flame Camp and a Star Rifle Camp under my command. I cannot promise you anything else, but at the very least, I will lead you to victory! I will lead everyone here to take on new territories and do everything within my power to bring you back alive to your families!"

Right then, I could feel everyone's mood shift. To a military man, among the honor and pride of a victorious campaign, coming home to their families was one of the most important creeds. I was, after all, a military man. This was a concept I understood deep in my soul.

Right then, the lieutenant also knelt before me. He looked at me in the eyes and said, "My lord commander, I... I do not deserve the respect you have given me. From this day forward, the Magic Flame Army will put its life on the line for the empire and follow my lord!"

All of the men knelt in unison. With that, the Magic Flame Army and the Star Rifle Army were successfully incorporated into the Royal Army!

.....

"He he..."

Pearl hid a smile and gave me a congratulatory glance. She whispered, "You little b*st*rd... you've got quite a few tricks up your sleeve!"

I smiled back and lowered my voice, "If I didn't have this much skill, how could I turn the Royal Army into the number one unit in the world?"

Pearl stiffened. Clearly she knew that I had the skill to turn the Royal Army into a strong unit, but never would she have imagined me to be that ambitious. But I wasn't sure of anything else more than I was of this.

However, in order to become the strongest army in the world, we needed over a hundred thousand men. Only then would we dare to compete for number one. Nonetheless, I had faith that I would succeed!

After the Battle of the Sea of No Return, most of the 30,000 soldiers in the Royal Army were new and our numbers were too small. We had lost over half of them to the Demons. And now I was given the opportunity to incorporate 100,000 elite soldiers into my army. If I had them before, I knew that my losses would've been tremendously less: I probably would have been able keep my losses under 20,000 and have pushed back the Fishmen troops and Yasha Army.

“Pa!”

I pulled out my Zhen Yue Blade out of the stone and looked at everyone squarely in the face, including Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Ye. Finally, I turned to face Pearl and said, “Your Highness, could these lieutenants please be promoted? Their current ranking is too low and they won't have much space to give orders in the future.”

Pearl grinned and pulled out a scroll from her breast plate, “I've already asked for this command for you yesterday. Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, Xia Ye, will you please stand forward!”

The four lieutenants generals behind me all knelt to the ground. Pearl continued, “Han Yuan will be promoted to High Dragon General, and Xiao Lie to Honored General, both of the 6th Tier, or positions that have the power to command ten thousand men. Long Xing and Xia Ye will both be promoted as Deputy Generals of the 5th Tier, both esteemed positions. Please, receive the command!”

.....”

The four generals were nearly weeping in gratitude. Han Yuan rubbed his eyes and acted as though he were wiping away a tear, “I've finally been promoted....”

I nearly choked on my laughter. That acting was too transparent and I couldn't help but call him out, “Han Yuan, be more serious and accept the scroll!”

“Yes sir!”

.....

The four generals were now promoted to fairly high positions. After all, they had received the orders in front of all the soldiers. I stepped forward and announced my next order, “Now, I will give my first command. The Royal Army will now be split into four separate camps. The Barbarian Blade and Shield unit will be the core of our foot soldiers, under the command of Han Yuan. Meanwhile, the elite cavalymen from each army will be transferred into one core Cavalry Unit under the command of Xiao Lie. The Magic Flame Army will now be known as the Magic Flame Unit, under the command of Long Xing, while the Star Rifle Army will now be known as the Star Rifle Unit, under the command of Xia Ye. In the next few days, the Moon Blade Forest will be cleared to create space for our next campgrounds. Everything from recruitment, horse buying, and training must be completed to the utmost satisfaction within a month’s time!”

Everyone listened closely to the order. All 30,000 men from the Magic Flame Unit and the Star Rifle Unit knelt before me simultaneously, accepting the order. The four commanders each went to their respective units and began preparations for the new campgrounds. Now that the Royal Army camped outside the city, it would soon become one of the greatest armies in charge of protecting the capital. This was a special privilege that no other army had.

After a long period of managing errands and delegating tasks, I had finally settled the matters with the Royal Army.

I urged my horse towards Dragon City to find Frost. It was time for me to rise to the next class advancement. Would I be the first person in Tian Ling City to advance to the 6th class?

.....

My Flying Scythe Horse dashed across the landscape and we arrived at Dragon City within twenty or so minutes. Dragon City was filled with steelsmiths and laborers, working to fix the broken city wall. Last time

when BOSS Ignaus led an invasion against Dragon City, Frost's presence managed to keep the demons at bay, but the damage to the city was immensemassive.

I was able to locate Frost after asking several soldiers. With my Zhen Yue Blade in hand, I walked towards the Commander's Hall. When I pushed open the great doors, I saw that Frost was hard at work behind a desk, signing a stack of papers. I could see from her face that she had worked all night. Frost was a warrior, trained in the art of battle. Undoubtedly, she would rather be having a much better time on the field than in this office.

She looked up when I walked in and her tired expression immediately brightened with a smile. She leapt up and ran over, giving me a hug. I was speechless and smiled back, "Frost, what is it?"

....."

Frost blushed as she stepped away from me and said, "I just.... I'm just so happy to see you now. I heard about your battle at Deer Lake. Great job in killing Kehl. To be honest, I never would've imagined that you'd grow so strong to the point where you'd be able to kill a Giant like him. Looks like my student has reached new heights...."

I studied her face and saw that a bandage was wrapped around her shoulder. There was even some blood seeping through it. Looks like the battle in Dragon City must have been a dangerous situation, or else Frost would not act so intimate. She was the Lady of Dragon City, and the only marquis that held down the Ice Ridge territories. Furthermore, she was the reincarnation of a God, and all of these titles and statuses made it difficult for her to be intimate with anyone.

.....

"Why have you come to visit me this time?" She smiled at me.

I waved my hand and said, "I was thinking that I could be considered truly strong now, and would like you to help me rise another tier. Am I worthy?"

Frost grinned. She then reached out and gave my chest a tap. Power funneled out from her fingertips into my body and she smiled, “Looks like you have grown. Alright then, give me 200,000 in Gold and I’ll raise your tier. I’ll even throw in an Ancient Hidden Technique!”

“Ancient Hidden Technique?”

My heart pumped and I immediately handed the money, “Let’s do this!”

Chapter 804: Ice Wings

“Shua!”

A golden ray of light fell upon me. Frost smiled and put her palm on my chest. She then muttered, “Hidden forests of Dragon City, stand firm and tall and protect our virtue. Even when all else falls, this desolate land shall stand strong.... I, Frost, Lady of Dragon City bestow upon you the honor of a Guardian Dragon General. From this day onward, you will become an indispensable part of my life. I will not fail you, even in the next life!”

.....

“Ding!”

System Notification: Congratulations Player [Xiao Yao Zi Zai] for becoming the first sixth advancement player. You have received the title “Guardian Dragon General” and have further received the following rewards: Level+1, Charm+50!

The reward for being the first sixth class advancement was this small?

I was feeling a little disappointed. Yet I was still feeling a little excited when I looked back at Frost, “Frost, what’s the Ancient Hidden Skill? Can you give me a demonstration...”

Frost grinned and stepped back, “This ancient skill has nearly been forgotten. I had to search through thousands of old scrolls and it took me several years of studying it before I could understand some of it. Make sure you watch carefully....”

Frost gave a high pitched roar and snowflakes suddenly began to apparate and dance around her before seeping into her skin. In the next moment, “Peng!”, ice burst from her back, creating a pair of beautiful ice wings. With a slight flutter of the wings, she lifted her body from the ground. Frost raised her Severing Beauty and swung it, only to create a powerful slash of sword energy that extended several meters. She smiled to me, “Did you see that? Even without activating my God power, I can still fly!”

“Huh?” I was stunned, “You... you want to teach me this kind of flying skill?”

Frost nodded, “Yup, do you not want to learn?”

My jaw nearly dropped, “I want to, of course I want to! Teach me know, how much money do I need to learn it?”

“Eh?” Frost put her hand to her mouth, “What kind of a stingy person do you take me to be? This is a skill that I figured out, so naturally you don’t need to pay for it. Here, let me teach you the incantation....”

“Shua!” A confirmation page suddenly appeared on my dashboard asking if I wanted to learn Frost’s skill—

[Ice Wings] (Deity Third Tier): Condenses the power of ancient glaciers to spawn wings, allowing the user to fly at will. Furthermore, this skill allows mounts to also harness this power. In close combat, the skill will create sword energy that extends five yards out. Activating this skill will greatly increase the effectiveness of your hidden stats. Every second of activation will cost you 1G. Learning this skill consumes 100 Charm!

.....

It was a Deity Third Tier skill?

I gaped at the stats. Learning this skill was definitely like hitting the jackpot. Before this I was just a ground soldier, but if I could fly with these ice wings and bring my mount as well, then how scared would I actually be of people like Frost Forest who rode on dragons?

“Shua!”

Ice Wings appeared in my skill list. Every second of activation consumed 1G. While the cost seemed demanding at first, that wasn’t a problem. I had the funds to support this!

I looked over and saw that there were still two more sixth class advancement sword skills in Frost’s interface—

[Holy Domain Strength] (SS Tier): At the threshold of the Holy Domain, this skill gives user’s the primary level of holy power, greatly increasing

the user's stats! You have already learned Ice Wings and cannot learn this skill at this time.

[Whirlwind Sword Break] (SS tier): This skill deals fierce damage to all targets within a 10 yard radius! You have already learned Ice Wings and cannot learn this skill at this time.

.....

They were all skills that I couldn't learn. This kind of denial wrought my heart. With this one, [Ice Wings], I actually lost the opportunity to learn two other skills! But, it does seem like [Ice Wings] already greatly increases my attack power and stamina, similar to the effect from [Holy Domain Strength]. Plus, the [Ice Wings] has the effect of increasing my attack range, which is somewhat similar to [Whirlwind Sword Break]. Not too bad, I can live with this!

Time to try out the Ice Wings!

I summoned my Flying Scythe Horse and leapt onto it before activating the skill. My horse whinnied and the temperature around us suddenly cooled down as flakes formed in the air. They quickly seeped into my body. I suddenly felt a force burst from my back and "peng!", long wings opened up. I had the ability to fly. The system controls also changed a bit, creating a more 3D-like type of movement. The difficulty of maneuvering increased a slight bit, but it was nothing too great. I had once tried out the flight ability of wind elves, so I wasn't completely unfamiliar with these controls.

"Hua!"

My wings flapped against the air and my feet left the ground. I pulled out my Zhen Yue Blade and threw a slash of sword energy. It looked like it was much stronger than my usual attacks.

Frost smiled to me and created a [Frost Shield], "Well, come at me Xiao Yao. Throw an attack and let me see just how much my student has improved."

I nodded and gripped my Zhen Yue Blade with both hands. I focused all

of my concentration and shot forward right at my beautiful master. I raised my Zhen Yue Blade high above my head and threw a heavy slash right onto the [Frost Shield]!

“Peng!”

Ice scattered from the shield and Frost was actually forced back two steps. “Pa!” She bumped against the desk, scattering some of the documents onto the ground. Dumbfounded, she exclaimed, “Wow, you... you’ve actually improved this much. Your attack had nearly rendered my [Frost Shield] useless against your attack...”

I looked over at her arm and saw that fresh blood was seeping out. Worried I said, “It's because you’re injured right now. Get better soon and don’t get into any more fights with people.”

Frost smiled tenderly, “Okay, I know.”

Right then, I heard the great doors to the hall burst open with a “peng!”. The Queen Zi Shu dashed over. She glanced around and said, “What happened? I felt the clash of two Holy Domain powers. Did someone attack?”

Frost couldn’t help but smile, “Nope, I was dueling with Li Xiao Yao!”

Zi Shu widened her eyes, “Oh, Master, looks like you’re becoming more and more powerful. You’ve definitely improved since that day you rescued me from the Wild Dragon Tribe. Ah, I’m already starting to feel some regret, I should’ve set up a more complete contract of service. That way... Master could do whatever he wanted with me....”

I glanced at the Queen Zi Shu’s slender figure and blood nearly shot out of my nose, “Zi Shu, be more serious. You’re a dragon and I’m a man!”

Zi Shu giggled, “No matter. Frost is a god and you’re a man, and you guys are still.... Oh, I think I’ve said too much. Lady Frost, you won’t try and avenge this by unburying my nest, right?”

Frost was expressionless, “I will not, as long as you don’t turn yourself into a dragon and leave a pile in the city....”

Zi Shu's face was flushed, "My lady, now you're in the wrong, at the very least I am a lady dragon, I'm not one of those lowly wild dragons... those, those are morons!"

Frost smiled and walked over to rest her hand on Zi Shu's shoulder, "Alright already, why don't you tell us about your plan to steal dragon eggs again? Just these 15 Dragon Knights are enough to put the Hybrid Demons at a disadvantage. We're going to need more!"

I was astonished, "Huh, you guys are going to the Wild Dragon Territory to steal more eggs?"

Frost smiled, "Of course, otherwise.... Dragon City's defenses are just too inferior...."

I replied, "But after last time, Ignaus will have undoubtedly increased their defenses. I don't think it'll be as easy as it was before. In addition, I can't defeat any elder dragons with the state I'm in right now!"

"As for that...." Frost looked at me and smiled, "Don't worry. This time we don't need you to be the cannon fodder. Zi Shu can take that role!"

The Queen Zi Shu looked dismayed, "Please don't, as a dragon, I have my dignity. I will not do something like stealing Dragon Eggs. How about we try something else?"

"Oh? What is that?" Frost asked.

Queen Zi Shu explained, "Silver Dragons, Crystal Dragons, and Flame Dragons are all part of the Holy Dragon tribe. They are already very rare to find. Last time, we practically stole all of the Holy Dragon eggs in the Wild Dragon Territory. Not only will it not be safe to steal any more, it will likely arouse Ignaus' attention. I'd rather have that not happen. How about we hunt on the outskirts of the Wild Dragon Territory and poach some of the simpler dragon tribe members? The Wide-winged Dragon and the Flat-Mouth Dragon are both middle tier dragons. While they don't match up to the strength of a Holy Dragon, they still have a lot of potential battle power under the right training. At the very least, they won't have any problems fighting against the Magic Sword Masters."

Frost was puzzled, "But...can a wild dragon be trained into a mount?"

Zi Shu loftily patted her chest and said, "My lady, you must be underestimating me a little too much. In my body flows royal blood among the Holy Dragon tribe. Furthermore, I have the Dragon Essence. I can force create a contract between any mid tier dragon and human."

Frost clapped her hands, "Alright then, we'll do just that!"

I turned around to leave.

Zi Shu hurriedly asked, "Eh, Master, where are you going?"

I was speechless, "You're standing around here discussing such swindling acts... I might as well go and do some good deeds like help protect the weak to make up for it!"

Frost grinned, "Alright go on then, my General of the South and/or Guardian Dragon General!"

I rolled my eyes.

.....

Right as I walked out of the hall, a messenger suddenly arrived. It was a rider from the Royal Army. He gripped the Royal Army flag in his hand and leapt down to his knees before me, "Commander, Supervisor Han Yuan asked me to let you know that a group of pirates appeared on the Eastern shore of the War God River and is threatening the civilians there. They've already killed a few of the people in the fisherman's village nearby. Should we exterminate them?"

"Pirates?"

"Yes sir!"

The messenger continued, "These pirates have a very advanced war boat and it looks like they've had years of experience raiding the War God's River. Even the Flame Dragon Army's navy couldn't handle them. General Han Yuan said... that these pirates have excellent weapons and most likely a treasure trove. If we can find that trove, then the Royal Army's funds will be much more bountiful!"

I clapped my hands and said, “Alright then, I’ll go back with you!”

“Yes sir!”

Chapter 805: Hunting Pirates

Outside Tian Ling City, deep within the Moon Blade Forest, the Royal Army was in the midst of setting up camp. All of the trees had been cleared and were used to construct each of the individual camps. A large clearing was left before the camp. It had been divided into the three different training grounds: A shooting range, the Blade Shield Camp training ground, and a horse range. A majestic flag stood tall and proud on a flagpole before the camp.

.....

“Neigh....”

My Flying Scythe Horse slowed down as it stepped onto the soft dirt of the camp. Han Yuan walked over to me from a group of soldiers that were digging out a reservoir, “General, you’ve arrived?”

I was a little puzzled, “Why are you digging out a reservoir next to the camp?”

“To train a navy!”

Han Yuan raised a fist and said, “You saw it in the last battle, the empire doesn’t have a single talented naval regiment. Even those deficient boats that Luo Lin’s underlings built were enough to completely defeat our navy. Furthermore, the Royal Army Camp’s border is adjacent to the War God’s River. The undercurrent in that river is even stronger than the Sea of No Return. We absolutely need to maintain our own war boats and navy. Otherwise, we won’t be able to respond in the next battle.”

I nodded approvingly, “Good job, have you told Princess Pearl about training a navy?”

“Her highness agreed. Even the budget for building these boats came out from her purse!” Han Yuan excitedly explained, “The War God’s River comes from the Ice Ridge Mountain and encircles the southern territories of Tian Ling City. It’s a natural barrier. In the past, only the Xia Yu Army maintained a navy of around 3,000 men to protect shipments. But now

the Royal Army is starting to build boats as well. At least on water, we're the only respectable navy that can compete against the Xia Yu Army."

I smiled and asked, "Then who will be responsible for the safety of Tian Ling City?"

Han Yuan smiled, "General, don't worry. The capital is being taken care of by Long Xing and Xia Ye. Furthermore, we'll always have 5,000 men posted inside the city for backup. Don't worry about this. Besides... Prince Theodore has already transferred ten thousand of his men into the capital and are currently camping in the city. Right now, the city's civic safety is not our responsibility any more."

I felt my heart sink a little, "Oh, so it was like that...."

Han Yuan lowered his voice and said, "General, I think Prince Theodore is starting to doubt the Royal Army. He's been targeting us on every small item. Just why is this?"

I rested the tip of my Zhen Yue Blade on the ground and smiled, "The Royal Army has risen to power too quickly. The strength that we displayed in the last battle was already enough to make Prince Theodore feel afraid. He's worried that his precious status as Number One Army in the country won't be secure. That's no problem, I want Theodore to feel threatened!"

Han Yuan exclaimed, "General, don't forget, he has royal blood running through his veins. If his majesty ever has.....Then he will be the first choice to take the throne. At that point, I'm afraid that he will harbor ill will towards the Royal Army. Have you considered that?"

I nodded, "I have, and if that is truly the case, then the Royal Army will just change flags. We can garrison the frontier. It's far from the city and Theodore won't be able to do anything to us. If all else fails...."

Han Yuan smiled, "General, if you decide to establish your own country, then I shall follow you, even to my death!"

I smiled back, "I wouldn't go that far. The soldiers of the Royal Army all have family inside Tian Ling City. I wouldn't want to drag them into this as well. How about this, we'll stride through this with our heads up and

not fear the future or the past. Now, pick out the most elite soldiers and cavalrymen. We're going to check out the pirate situation on the War God's River. I want to see just how many arms and heads this Pirate Captain really has, to have no fear of the Xia Yu Navy."

"I've already prepared 4,000 men and horses. Half are from the Cavalry Unit and the other half from the Blade and Shield unit. Shall we set off now?"

"Let's move out!"

.....

I gave out the command and the bugle sounded. Four thousand strong men from the Royal Army set out with me and Han Yuan in the lead. After twenty minutes of marching, I could hear the roars of the river. The wind gently blew against our faces and a earthy scent wafted up my nose. This was the scent of the War God's River. I had experienced it once before when I was crossing the Bridge of Fate. However, there was still quite a ways before we would reach our destination. I heard a cry in the distance. There was a fiery blaze deep in the forest!

"General!"

Han Yuan raised his spear and pointed at the fiery light, "I remember that small village, there's around 10,000 souls in there. Looks like the pirates have already begun their raid!"

I nodded, "Full speed ahead everyone, cavalrymen, lead the charge!"

My Flying Scythe Horse let out a whine and began galloping ahead. Han Yuan led two thousand of the Royal Army's cavalry and followed behind. When we rushed out of the forest, I could see that the tops of the village houses had already been set on fire. Furthermore, a group of robust men were in the middle of massacring the villagers. One of them shouted, "Kill all the men and bring back the young women. We'll take all their food and money back to the ship. Move quickly, the Xia Yu Army men are nothing like the Wild Thunder Army's!"

Cries rang out from the little village. Most of the villagers had been

gathered at the center and were being slaughtered by the pirates.

“Keng!”

From a distance, I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and roared, “Royal Army, charge! Those savages wielding the blades have zero regard for human lives. Kill them all! Have no mercy! Blade and Shield Camp, encircle the village, don’t let a single pirate out!”

Right as I reached the village, two of the pirates charged at me with their blades in hand. They had the strength of a level 152 Titan tier monster and were considered fairly strong compared to the current level of NPCs. However, the Royal Army soldiers behind me were veterans and were already over level 150. Furthermore, all the men in our cavalry were of Titan tier strength. There were even some lieutenants and captains at Valkyrie and Emperor Tiers. They were completely fearless before these pirates.

“Shua!”

My Dragon Reservoir Sword slashed through the two pirates as it flew out with a [Blade Spin]. My Flying Scythe Horse reared up and then dashed forward, giving me the chance to cut right into their necks. Two incredible damage numbers popped up—

“31,282!”

“33,127!”

Seeing damage like that, I felt my heart jump and I was very satisfied with the result. My Ancient Heavenly Tiger leapt out from a magic circle and assisted in the battle. Behind me, Han Yuan led a group of soldiers and charged into the fray. Around a hundred of the pirates that were trying to stop them were immediately cut down. Not a single one was shown mercy.

In the plaza, there were at least another thousand pirates guarding the loot and the villagers. One of them looked at the emblem on my shoulder and shuddered. He cried out, “Sh*t! Its the Royal Army. That.... That man is the commander who killed the Blood Giant at Deer Lake, the General of

the South! D*mm*t, why are they here? Isn't this Xia Yu and Wild Thunder Armies' territory?"

Another pirate slammed his halberd into the ground and cried out, "Captain, what do we do now?"

The leader leapt onto a horse, "Leave the loot and the women and escape with me. We're retreating to the War God's River. Water is our territory!"

As he said that, he threw a provocative glance at me and roared, "General of the Royal Army, if you have the guts, come after us! We'll fight to the death on the War God's River!"

I didn't give him a second thought and slashed another pirate. I continued commanding the Royal Army to kill all the pirates in the area. In less than ten minutes, only a handful were left.

Burning buildings lit up the village. An elder walked over to me from the plaza, his eyes brimming with tears, "Lord General... I am the chief of this village. Thank you for leading your army here. Otherwise, I'm afraid our little Starlight Village would not have survived this catastrophe. Starlight will forever be in your debt...."

I replied, "Please, it is no problem. Hurry and stop the fires. That's right, isn't this region under the protection of the Xia Yu Army? Why did they not come and protect you from the pirates?"

The old man shuddered, he did not seem very candid.

I could already guess from his reaction about what had happened, "No matter what it is, just tell me. Even if the world were to fall, I will support you!"

The old man's cane started to shudder and fury overtook his emotions, "This territory was originally under the protection of the Xia Yu Army, but a year ago, the Wild Thunder Army began camping here. They ended up taking control over the safety and protection of this area. However... the pirates began to raid these areas more and more, and the empire's troops never came to help. I heard a rumor that the pirates have been splitting the loot with an official from the Wild Thunder Army. Even.... our little

village used to have a famous pretty young lady known as “Iris”. She had been kidnapped close to half a year ago. I heard that she was taken to become a servant in some government official’s household. She’s probably already lost her innocence....”

“The Wild Thunder ARmy?”

I furrowed my brow. I thought back to the General Louis who had a red handkerchief tied around his arm in the battle. He was the commander of the Wild Thunder Army. Rumor had it that he was a romantic. Maybe this kidnapping had to do with him?

The old man continued, “General, a dozen or so miles from here are several other villages that have also been raided by these pirates. We’ve been living in hell for the past year, our honor and dignity crushed. If this continues, I’m afraid that the Moon Blade Forest will be uninhabitable!”

I nodded, “Please don’t worry, the empire’s Royal Army is now garrisoned in the Moon Blade Forest. We’ll eradicate this pirate nuisance so that you may live a peaceful life.”

Thank you general, thank you. And... general, if it’s possible.... Can you bring Iris back? She’s my granddaughter....”

“Don’t worry, I will do everything I can!”

“Thank you general!”

“Ding!”

System Notification: You have received the quest [Save the Young Woman Iris] (SSS Tier)

Quest Details: Pursue the pirate troops and locate the young girl who is known as Iris and bring her back to her grandfather. You will receive a generous reward upon completion. Furthermore, your reputation among the villagers will increase. Please note, these pirates are much stronger than you may think. Beware, they are not your only enemy!

SSS Tier quest. It wasn’t a main story quest, but there was still experience to be gained from it!

.....

I looked around and saw that the fires were under control and immediately turned around to face Han Yuan, "Let's go and pursue them. I want to see just how strong those pirates are on the War God's River!"

"Yes sir!" Han Yuan was incredibly excited. Before he joined the army he was a commoner and so naturally understood the ails of these villagers. He fiercely wanted to show these pirates justice.

"Royal Army, advance to the west!"

Han Yuan gave the command and two thousand of the cavalrymen turned to face the west. Pirate corpses were scattered on the outskirts of the village. The barbarian troops of the Blade and Shield Camp had completely massacred them. One of the lieutenants walked over and reported back to me, "General, a dozen or so of the pirates slipped past our net and went south towards the War God's River. That must be where their ship is."

I nodded, "Follow them!"

"Yes sir!"

Chapter 806: Termite of the Empire

A soft breeze brushed against my face, giving me a refreshing feeling. The night was filled with bright stars. I looked up and saw the luminous milky way in the sky. The Flying Scythe Horse gave a worried whimper, as though it could smell danger in the air. Even so, I didn't hesitate for a second and continued straight forward, towards the War God's River.

"Scouts, check the area up ahead!"

Han Yuan gave the command in a low voice and three riders set off into the dark. After a few minutes, they reported back, "General, there are seven boats on the river, each extremely fortified and well made. There are an even number of cannons installed on each side. It looks as though they're Dragon Crystal Cannons as well. It was too dark to tell though."

Han Yuan turned around to me, "General, what should we do?"

I replied, "What do you think we should do?"

Han Yuan raised his spear and clenched his teeth, "These d*mn*d pirates, raiding, killing the villagers, and violating their women. We should've burned them all to ground a long time ago. Even if we take losses in this battle, it is for the sake of justice! The cavalry will lead the charge. If we don't lose too many people, then we'll board the boats. General, how does that sound?"

I nodded in agreement and gave the command, "Cavalry camp, spread out and charge at their boats. When we get close to the shore, immediately leave your horses and board the boats. We must keep those pirates on shore."

"Yes general!"

A group of cavalrymen spread out in a line and began their charge. I gripped the Dragon Reservoir Sword hilt from behind my back and shouted, "Charge!"

The Barbarian Blade and Shield Soldiers all grabbed their torches and charged, covered by the darkness at the War God's River's bank while I

was at the vanguard. The river was less than a hundred meters away. As the boats came into sight, I could tell that these were no frail pirates. Wasn't it because of these boats that they were able to stand on par with the empire's navy?

On the boats, I could hear the pirates' voices that were carried on by the wind, "They've arrived! Target the cannons at them and give them hell! Motherf*ckers, these meddlesome Royal Army soldiers actually dare to mess with Dragonling Army. They're just looking to die!"

I hid a smile. These wretched pirates actually dared to call themselves the Dragonling Army? Then today, the Royal Army will wipe the Dragonling Army from this map and pick up some experience and rewards on the way!

Cannonfire resounded from the ships and muzzle flashes lit up the night sky. "Peng peng peng!" the shots sounded. However, the Royal Army was spread out and was moving incredibly fast, making them hard to target. Only a small dozen were blasted to death. The rest successfully reached the beach. A few of boats were receiving the retreating pirates and were about to leave.

A dozen of Royal Army soldiers rushed into the water at miraculous speeds, they left their mounts ashore and boarded the ship.

On the ship, a group of pirates raised their long bows and aimed downwards at our soldiers. The Royal Army cavalymen were all clothed in thick armor so the arrows couldn't pierce through. Those kinds of attacks weren't enough to kill them. Even so, they couldn't avoid minor injuries and blood dripped into the river.

"Board the boats and cut down their helmsman and force them back on shore!" Han Yuan shouted.

A group from the Royal Army seemed to have become navy sailors. One after another, they pulled out their blades and began climbing up the battle boats. I, on the other hand, urged my Flying Scythe Horse towards another ship. When I was only twenty meters from the ship, my Flying Scythe Horse let out a whine, luring the pirates towards me. He roared,

“Look, that man is the Royal Army Commander! Let’s see if he’s invincible or not!”

I clenched my teeth and activated [Ice Wings]. My horse let out another screech as [Ice Wings] burst from its back. I accelerated into the air and charged towards the boat with my sword in hand. All the Titan Tier monsters on the ship activated their long-ranged skills. I threw a slash into the crowd, unleashing a [Seven Star Fragment Slash]. Right then, all of the Titan monsters dropped into critical health. My little tiger roared beside me and launched itself into the crowd. With a single [Burstfire Raid], the little pet tiger killed a bunch of pirates on deck.

My boots landed lightly on the wooden boards of the ship. The second I touched the ground, I launched myself straight towards the helm. “Ka Cha!” I cut through the chest of one of the sailors and pushed him off the ship. “Pa!” I kicked the steer with my left leg, turning it straight towards shore. A group of warriors from the Royal Army took advantage of my distraction and immediately began boarding the boat. In close combat, the ships’ cannons were of no use. After a few more minutes, even the Barbarian Blade and Shield camp had caught up and were boarding the ship. In an instant, the mob of Dragonling soldiers were scattered and decimated!

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“Landfall!”

Han Yuan’s voice echoed from the distance. Under the starlight, I could faintly make out that four of the ships were beached, whereas the other three were escaping down the river. Even so, I was very satisfied with this result.

Screams rose up from all over the ships. Against these pirates, the Royal Army soldiers did not show any mercy. I activated [Ice Wings] and flew onto the main ship where Han Yuan was leading the fight. This ship was at least two times bigger than the other ships and held at least 500 men. Han Yuan looked up at me and his eyes widened, “General, you.... Are you in the [Holy Domain] state?”

I was puzzled by his question, “Eh.... something like that?”

Han Yuan whooped in glee, “I never imagined the day would come where the Royal Army would have a [Holy Domain] warrior in its ranks, this is too great.... Men, keep on fighting! We’re going to cut all of these pirates down!”

Right then, there was a row of pirates kneeling before us. One of them was nearly weeping and shouted, “I’m innocent! I was tricked on to this ship to become a pirate. Please, don’t kill me. I didn’t do anything. Please, don’t kill me!”

One of the pirates glared at him and said, “Kieran, you’re head of our rear force, where’s your guts? People like you disgust me!”

I coldly laughed and picked the pirate up by the scruff of his shirt, “So you have guts? Are people who slay defenseless villagers the only ones who have guts? Alright then, I’ll personally send you on your way!”

I swung my Dragon Reservoir Sword, throwing the b*st*rd’s head into the air. I then tossed his body into the sea to be fed to the fish.

Afterwards, I walked over towards the rear captain named Kieran and said, “Right now I only have one question. You must tell me the full truth and nothing but the truth. Okay?”

Kieran had seen me kill someone just now, which only increased his fear in facing my smile. He trembled, “You’re really not going to kill me? I.... I don’t trust you!”

I grinned, “If you can’t trust me, who can you trust? Take a look around you, all of these Royal Army soldiers are ready to cut you down at any moment, that is, if you don’t put your trust in me.”

Han Yuan’s smile became more malicious. Right then, Kieran’s face practically turned green, “Alright then General, go ahead and ask. I’ll tell you everything I know!”

I nodded, “Despite the fact that the Dragonling Army has raided several villages along the shores of the War God’s River, why hasn’t the government done anything? There must be someone who’s pardoning

your actions, right? Tell me, is it the Violent Thunder Army?"

Kieran's face paled, "I... I'm just the captain of the rear guard, I don't know..."

I swung my blade, cutting off the head of another pirate and coldly smiled, "Do you really not know?"

Kieran shook even harder and he even pissed himself, "I'll tell you, I'll tell you... but, my lord, after I tell you everything, will you really spare me?"

I nodded, "Yes, if you tell me the full truth, I will not kill you!"

Kieran finally confessed, "Alright then, the captain of the Dragonling Army is called "Dragon Scale", and he was one of the soldiers in the empire. One day, after a battle, he drank too much and raped several innocent young women. He was whipped and chased out of the army by Princess Pearl. It is because of this event that he founded the Dragonling Army to take revenge on the empire. A year ago, the Violent Thunder Army garrisoned its troops along these shores. The superior of the Spear Camp is called "Yulo". He's an old friend of Dragon Scale's. After some negotiations, they reached an agreement. The five thousand men posted in the northwest region of the Moon Blade Forest were ordered to not make any moves. Half of the loot is split between the Captain and that superior. Even the Dragon Crystal Cannons and regular cannons were provided to us by the Violent Thunder Army... if you don't believe me, my lord, just look yourself! The insignia of the Violent Thunder Army is carved into the base. Even though they've been grounded, there should still be some vestige!"

I nearly leapt up and turned around, "Han Yuan, protect these Dragon Crystal Cannons!"

Han Yuan already understood what I was thinking and smiled, "General, do not worry. I have never and will never let you down!"

I glanced back at Kieran and said, "Alright tell me, are there any other terms? In other words, besides the loot, do you send anything else to Yulo?"

Han Yuan cut down another pirate and threw him off the boat. Kieran shuddered and said, “Half a year ago, we raided the Starlight Village and kidnapped a very beautiful young woman. I was originally planning on taking her back to my hometown and marrying her. But... but Yugo took a fancy for her and insisted on taking her in as his mistress. All I could do was give her to him. I had no other choice, I....”

I coldly laughed, “That young maiden is Iris. When you took her innocence, she must’ve fought hard against you right?”

Kieran’s face turned green, “My lord, I.... Iris and I are truly in love!”

I couldn’t help but laugh at the ridiculousness of his assertion, “You raided Iris’ village and you claim that you two are in love? Do you think that Iris is an idiot, or are you the idiot?”

Kieran trembled, as though he realized what had happened. He screeched, “General, you... you said that as long as I told you the truth, you wouldn’t kill me. You... you have to follow your promise!”

I bent over so that I was right beside his ear and coldly said, “Yes, I did say that I wouldn’t kill you. However, the men behind me will naturally follow through!”

Tears of fear flowed down Kieran’s face. Han Yuan raised his blade and his head rolled to the ground. He coldly said, “You cowardly piece of sh*t, you actually dare to rape young women. How pathetic! My lord, what do we do now?”

I looked into the darkness and said, “Call for Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Ye. Have them deploy ten thousand men to the War God’s River. We’ll create a makeshift dock on the War God’s River and take these four ships as our starting force. We’ll begin constructing our navy here, along the river! Afterwards, you and Xiao Lie will immediately begin deploy the entire Royal Army here on standby for orders!”

Han Yuan was stunned, “My lord, even if we spared ten thousand to begin constructing the docks, there are at least 40,000 men left. You want to gather them all?”

“Yes!”

“Alright!” Seeing the determination in my eyes, Han Yuan decided to follow orders without another word.

Chapter 807: The Demise of a Beauty

As the sun rose over the horizon, ten thousand Royal Army soldiers arrived at the shores of the War God's River. Xia Ye personally supervised the construction of the dock. When he saw me, he had a puzzled expression on his face. Long Xing walked over and said, "Commander, have you seriously decided to wage war on these pirates? If the report I received is correct, the Dragonling Army has over ten thousand men in their ranks and over 70 battleships. Over the past night, the Royal Army has at most a small branch of navy men.

I rested my Zhen Yue Blade over my shoulder and smiled, "That is exactly what I want to do. I want to make a move against the Dragonling Army. They have been reckless on this War God's River for far too long. During those years, they've raided villages and stolen Dragon Crystal cannons. Fighting with them isn't only for training the Royal Army troops, it will also give us a chance to acquire some weaponry and expand our inventory."

Long Xing smiled, "Commander, you're truly wise! However, there's one point I'm not sure if I should bring up or not...."

I replied, "Go ahead!"

Long Xing lowered his voice and whispered into my ear, "Louis, the general of the Violent Thunder Army has always held loose reigns with his subordinates and allow them to do as they please. That's why the Violent Thunder Army is unstructured. Despite that, they're incredibly strong. His Majesty has always been partial towards the Violent Thunder Army. Commander, if you are going to try to touch the Violent Thunder Army, you must carefully consider your actions. Otherwise, I'm afraid that we won't have to wait for the Flame Dragon Army to move against us first."

I nodded and tightened my grip around the hilt of my sword, "If we don't destroy the Dragonling Army, they will remain a threat to the villagers who live in this area. Seeing as both the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Armies have made it clear that they will protect themselves, then the

Royal Army will have to act. Someone has to do the job after all.”

Surprise took over Long Xing’s face. Finally he gave a sigh of defeat and praise, “Alright, no matter what my lord decides to do, I, Long Xing, will leave my life in your hands. Worst case scenario, I die!”

I smiled and patted his shoulder, “Alright already, go on and construct that dock. If you need any materials, send a letter to Princess Pearl. She will support you with anything you need. This dock will be the foundation of our campaign against the hundreds of ships that the Dragonling Army has. We will push our cannons and Dragon Crystal Cannons here to defend and counter any attack that comes at us!”

“Yes my lord!”

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I turned around and faced Han Yuan and Xiao Lie, “Do any of you know the exact location of the Long Spear garrison of the Violent Thunder Army?”

Han Yuan’s face lit up, “General, we.... are we really going to act against the Long Spear Unit of the Violent Thunder Army?”

“What else would we be doing?”

I smiled and leapt onto my horse, “Prepare to set out! We’ll be moving fast. We cannot let them get wind of our advance. We’ll charge straight towards the Long Spear camp and force them to put down their weapons!”

“Yes sir!”

In that next moment, forty thousand Royal Army troops set out in that direction. The foot soldiers led the march while the cavalry followed close behind. Our entire cavalry consisted of heavy armor types. Experienced riders would never let their mounts tire out before a battle, which was why our soldiers were leading their horses on this march!

After twenty minutes, our procession entered the northwest region of the Moon Blade Forest. I could see dark smoke rising above the treetops in the distance. It was mealtime for the Long Spear Unit of the Violent

Thunder Camp. It was a five thousand man camp, and several hundred streams of smoke rose up into the sky.

I waved my hand and ordered in a low voice, “All cavalrymen, mount your horses and charge into the center of their camp with me. Foot soldiers, surround the area, make sure that not a single one of those five thousand soldiers leaves the premises!”

Han Yuan asked, “My lord, all of the soldiers in the Long Spear Unit are elites, and they’ve got twenty Dragon Crystal Cannons in their ranks. How are we going to do it?”

I replied simply, “We’ll ambush them, giving them no chance to prepare and we’ll take control of their cannons first!”

“Yes sir!”

.....

Next, all of the soldiers rushed out from the brush. So that we wouldn’t attract too much attention, I decided to not activate my [Ice Wing]s and charged out on my horse. I led twenty thousand men charging into the camp. The most ridiculous part of this invasion was the fact that the enemy’s scouts only went a hundred meters out from their camp. What use was that!

“Who is it!?”

A few of the soldiers in the camp angrily shouted and charged at us with their spears in hand.

I held up my hand, revealing the badge of the General of the South and said, “The General of the South, Li Xiao Yao, is here for inspection. Put down your weapons, or else I will not be polite!”

The soldiers were all startled. There was just too much of a difference in our ranks and they didn’t dare pull any moves on me. One after another they put down their spears. Han Yuan immediately led a thousand men into the central camp. We immediately took control of the The Dragon Crystal Cannons that were lined up on both sides. There wasn’t a single person at the training grounds. Rather, the soldiers were scattered all

throughout the camp, drinking and dallying around. I could even hear the playful shrieks of women in some of the tents. This Violent Thunder army really was wild. They indulged in their own greed and lust, which only fed into their wild nature and battle power. Despite that, a strong army is based off discipline and rules, not indulging on the wild behavior of its soldiers.

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and ran straight over, shouting, “Lay down your weapons and surrender! Men, charge into the central tent with me!”

A group of Royal Army cavalymen charged forth. A dozen or so guards stepped forward to block our path. Han Yuan didn’t hesitate for one moment and threw his long spear out. “Pu Chi!” he killed one of the Long Spear soldiers. The cavalymen all raised their defenses. In the end, around a hundred of the Violent Thunder soldiers were killed. Han Yuan was enraged. That b*st*rd was a man who could not allow a single dust in his eye. How could he standby and watch military men be involved in evil acts?

“Control the central tent but do not kill anyone!” I shouted my orders.

A group of Royal Army soldiers switched over to longbows and stood guard while a unit of Barbarian Blade and Shield soldiers charged into the encampment. They stood before the archers with their heavy shields, not leaving a single crack in formation.

Han Yuan raised his blood spear and walked over, “Royal Army Commander, General of the South Li Xiao Yao wishes to see the lieutenant of the Long Spear Army Unit!”

Right then, an officer with a half tucked shirt and unkempt clothes walked out from the tent. His face was flushed, and it reeked of alcohol as the smell permeated through his clothing. He stumbled out of the tent, but the sight of dead men and horses seemed to have brought his consciousness back. His face green, he shouted, “The Royal Army? F*ckers, do you know that you’re in the Violent Thunder camp? You actually dare to trespass into the central encampment of the Long Spear Army? Li Xiao

Yao, even if you are the General of the South, who the f*ck gave you permission to kill my soldiers and enter my territory?"

I smiled, "Surrender!"

Han Yuan walked over and bent over to pull out the sword at Yugo's hip, "This sword, if it isn't being used to kill bandits who threaten the livelihood of our citizens, is it being used to kill dogs?"

Yugo swayed a bit and he knocked over a frame of spears, "Royal Army! You actually dare, I...I will report you to my commander! You won't get a single thing out of me!"

Right then, a few women suddenly ran out from the camp. All of them were wearing ragged clothes. One of them had an ashen expression. I could even see some blood on her clothing. Her face was streaked with tear marks. As though she were a frightened deer, she looked at all of the armed Royal Army soldiers and knelt to the ground, "Kill me.... Please kill me, I'd rather die than live on like a toy...."

I slid off my horse and said, "Miss, we aren't part of the Violent Thunder Army, we're the Royal Army. The Violent Thunder Army's Long Spear Unit is without a doubt, guilty of all crimes. We have forced all of them to surrender. Miss, do not be afraid. Where are you from? I'll take you home!"

The girl wept, "No, my father was already killed by your soldiers and my innocence was taken away by them. I have no family. I have no home to return to. All I want to do is die!"

Right then, Yugo let out a cold laugh, "B*tch, your husband is right here and you want to die? Or is it that you want to throw yourself into the embrace of the General of the South? B*tch, did you think I would let you go so easily?"

I roared back, "Shut your hole!"

Yugo's expression twisted with malice. He suddenly pulled out the sword of a nearby Royal Army soldier and charged straight at the young girl's back. I quickly threw out my Dragon Reservoir Sword with a [Blade Spin].

“Keng!” I parried Yugo’s blade. The young girl rammed into me and “Hua La!”, she leapt into my arms. She looked up and I could see fury and rage in her eyes, “You and him are the same! You are all beasts who feed on the flesh of us villagers. Let go of me!”

She struggled out of my arms and then ran backwards, only to be met with a pierce from Yugo!

“Pu Chi!”

Blood spurt forward and the blade of the halberd pierced through the young girl’s chest. Blood flowed like a river down the tip of the blade in her back.

I stood there in shock, unable to move. While it was a virtual human, the emotions I had were real. How could this young girl die right in front of me, while I was powerless?

“Keng!”

I pulled out my Zhen Yue Blade and activated my [Ice Wing]s and dashed right to the young girl’s side. “Pa Cha!” I cut off the hilt of the long halberd and rested my blade right against Yugo’s neck. At that moment, Han Yuan and the rest all came up to surround us. “Shua Shua!” several arrows were released, plunging their heads right into Yugo’s body.

“Kneel!”

Han Yuan kicked the back of Yugo’s legs, forcing him onto his knees. He looked over at me, “General, how do we deal with him?”

I didn’t say a word and walked right up to him with a slash. Blood spurt forth. Yugo was just a demi-BOSS. He was at critical health and this action was within the limits of the quest. I cut off his head with my Zhen Yue Blade and threw it into the distance.

When I turned around, the young girl held onto the rest of the halberd and knelt to the ground, looking at me. Her mouth twitched, as though she were smiling at me, but she couldn’t say a word. She closed her eyes and passed away.

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Han Yuan threw a kick at Yugo's body and said, "B*st*rd, this man is even worse than an animal!"

Xiao Lie walked over. He was much calmer than Han Yuan and he softly spoke to me, "Commander, killing Yugo is considered a criminal act and signifies infighting among the military ranks. If the higher ups decide to pursue this matter, then it'll become a difficult matter to deal with. What do we do now?"

I looked over at the Violent Thunder soldiers that were all kneeling before us and said, "They disregarded the violent crimes that the Dragonling Army were committing against the villagers and actually dared to call themselves an army of the empire. Force them all to lay down their arms and move their equipment back to the Royal Army garrison. Afterwards, escort them as criminals back to Tian Ling City. Furthermore, bring evidence of their wrongdoings and their collusion with the Dragonling Army. We have to make the first move. Hopefully there's still a chance for us to turn this around."

Xiao Lie nodded, "Yup, seems like that's all we can do for now!"

Chapter 808: Sss Tier Military Quest

Over two hundred young maidens were soon gathered outside of the Violent Thunder Spear Army camp. Most of them were girls who had been kidnapped from the villages, brought to become slaves for these high ranked officers. I walked over before the crowd of women and asked, "Which one of you is Iris?"

As soon as the words left my mouth, all of the girls frantically whispered amongst themselves. They were all incredibly afraid and wouldn't trust anybody.

I cleared my throat and continued, "I'm the Commander of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao, and I once passed through Starlight Village. The old chief asked me to find his granddaughter, whose name is Iris. Iris, if you don't come out, your grandfather will continue to worry for you. I will send my men to escort you back, please believe me!"

Finally, a young elegant girl walked out, dressed completely in green. She was one of the girls that came from Yugo's tent. She looked up at me with her beautiful eyes and trembled in fear. Tears filled her eyes as she asked, "You... you.... Did my grandfather really send you here to save me?"

I nodded, "You're Iris?"

"Yes..." She turned her face away and looked at Yugo's body with hatred in her stare, "Half a year ago, I was kidnapped by the pirates. Since then, I've always been serving this man... General, thank you for killing Yugo and taking revenge for me!"

I pursed my lips and didn't say anything. I turned around to Han Yuan and said, "Have one of the captains lead a hundred man team to take Iris back to Starlight Village. The rest of you, begin distributing some rations to the remaining girls and take those five thousand Spear soldiers back to the capital!"

"Yes sir!"

After the hundred man unit left to escort Iris back, the quest was

considered complete. A bell rang beside my ear—

“Ding!”

System Notification: Congratulations, you have completed the SSS tier quest [Rescue the Maiden Iris], and have received the following reward: Experience Bar +75%, Gold +10000, Charm+10!

Not bad. This kind of reward was better than nothing. At least I was leveling up faster than I would have if I were to farm experience from monsters. I was getting close to the next level now.

.....

The Violent Thunder Long Spear Garrison was sealed off by my troops, but a few of their soldiers still managed to escape the net. It was not safe for us to stay too long in one place. We needed to return to Tian Ling City as soon as possible. Otherwise, based on my understanding of Louis' personality, he will definitely deploy troops to stop us midway. At that point, it would be difficult for us to carry out the mission.

Thankfully, we didn't encounter any obstacles on the way there. The Royal Army escorted five thousand NPC soldiers into the city, gaining a lot of attention as we passed through the central plaza. However, everyone was able to understand with a single glance about what had happened. At the current stage, every player knew that I was the highest military ranked player in Tian Ling City.

Twenty thousand Royal Army troops escorted five thousand Long Spear soldiers to the gates of the Royal Palace and waited there for further instructions. I then led Han Yuan and Xiao Lie along with five of the lieutenants from the Long Spear Garrison into the Great Hall. Before the great doors, one of the guards walked out and glared at me, “General of the South, you've really outdone yourself this time. You actually dared to flaunt your new status and take your own soldiers to interfere with another army of the empire....”

I wryly smiled, “Thank you, thank you, his majesty and Princess Pearl are in the hall, correct?”

“Yes they are. They’re in the middle of a discussion, but they’ve allowed you to bring the men in for an audience!”

“Yes sir!”

I led the line of people and stepped into the Great Hall. Who knows how many times I’ve stepped into the same hall, and yet it felt oppressive and daunting this time. I didn’t feel worried until after the deed had been done. If King Rob was a wise ruler, he would undoubtedly speak up for me, but if he wasn’t, then this latest incident was more than enough to kill me. Thankfully this was a game, and so dying once was no big deal. Players had the power to resurrect themselves multiple times after all.

Military and diplomatic officers stood in a long line on both sides in the Great Hall. When I walked in, I could see the commander of the Violent Thunder Army—Guardian General Louis, kneeling on the ground. The red handkerchief that was tied around his armed swayed slightly in the breeze. He tearfully cried out, “Your majesty, you must bring justice for the soldiers of the Violent Thunder Army! At the Sea of No Return and the Battle of Deer Lake, our soldiers were bathed in blood and we’ve lost over half our men! Our blood has dyed every inch of this empire’s land. But Li Xiao Yao, under the guise of Princess Pearl’s protection and his one military achievement, actually dares to attack a garrison of the Violent Thunder Army in broad daylight and kill my general, Yugo. Not only that, he’s humiliated five thousand of my soldiers by parading them through the capital like prisoners. This... this is an utter disrespect to my men. Your majesty, you have to bring this to justice. Otherwise, the thousands of men who have died for this country will not rest peacefully....”

The Louis right then didn’t have an ounce of a commander’s dignity. Instead, he acted more like a little b*tch. Theodore, Owen, and Les looked disdainfully at him. Princess Pearl was more candid and spoke out, “General Louis, please stand up. Is this how a commander of a nation’s army should act?”

Louis looked up with swollen eyes, “Your majesty, I’ve been wronged!”

King Rob stood up with the Ruler’s Sword at his hip and addressed me in

a calm and powerful voice, “General Li of the Royal Army, do you have any objections to Commander Louis’ allegations? Without permission, you deployed the Royal Army troops against the Violent Thunder Army and furthermore seized their garrison. Is this true?”

I nodded, “Everything you have stated is true, but there were necessary reasons for these actions.”

“What reasons?” the crown prince Theodore asked coldly.

I looked up at the officers around me and at his majesty. Without arrogance nor craven, I stated, “The War God’s River has long faced the wrath of the pirates. These pirates call themselves the Dragonling Army and hold close to a hundred battleships. In addition, they have over ten thousand men in their ranks. On countless occasions they have raided the villagers that live on both shores, not only murdering the innocents and setting fire to their homes, but also kidnapping their women and children. Based on my understanding, the one imperial army that is based there, the Violent Thunder Army, have left them to wreak havoc without moving a single finger. There are even allegations of shady dealings between the two. As such, I took it upon the Royal Army to investigate further.”

Louis immediately stood up and glared at me with his red eyes, “General Li, you are maliciously defaming my good name! My Violent Thunder Army is completely loyal to the empire. How... how could we do something so dishonorable? What evidence do you have? Just what gives you the right to smear the name of the Violent Thunder Army? I will not forgive you for this!”

Princess Pearl added, “Exactly. Li Xiao Yao, do you have evidence?”

I nodded and waved my hand, signaling for Xiao Lie to bring in the Dragon Crystal Cannon and the regular cannon into the great hall. I pointed at the insignia on the base and said, “These are cannons I found in the Dragonling ships and they just happen to have the insignia of the Violent Thunder Army. This is proof that it was assigned to the Violent Thunder Army from the military treasury. Even though its been filed down, you can still recognize the outline. Moreover, the Dragonling Army

kidnapped several young women from their families in the villages, and quite a few have been sent to entertain the soldiers of the Violent Thunder Army's Long Spear Garrison. On this point, there are just too many witnesses."

It was only after I spoke that the old king was enraged. He slammed his fist against the throne and roared, "Louis, what is the meaning of this? Did your Violent Thunder Army really collude with the pirates?"

Louis was so stunned and intimidated that he immediately fell to his knees and reported, "Your majesty, I.... I have no knowledge of this!"

I smiled wryly, "Perhaps General Louis truly is ignorant of these matters. After all, it was completely controlled by the commander of the Long Spear Garrison, General Yugo. Your majesty, please judge wisely."

The old king looked over at Louis and said, "General Louis, did you truly have no knowledge of this?"

Louis bowed his head to the floor in a rough kowtow and cried out, "Your majesty is wise, I truly did not know. I am guilty of not supervising my soldiers well enough and allowing Yugo to commit such heinous acts. For that I have no argument!"

The old king smiled softly, "Alright then, seeing as you have admitted to your guilt, then I shall leave mercy! Now, General Louis will be demoted to a Deputy General, but will still remain the commander of the Violent Thunder Army. Make sure you properly command your troops before something like this happens again!"

Before this, Louis, as a Guardian General, was one rank higher than me, a General of the South. However, now that he was demoted to a Deputy General, he was one rank lower than me. Sliding down two ranks must be a hard pill for him to swallow, but this punishment was already very light.

.....

Louis retreated into the line of officers while I remained in my spot. King Rob looked over at me with a mysterious look in his eye. He smiled, "General Li Xiao Yao, your achievements against the Dragonling Army will

not be overlooked. You have once again worked hard for the empire and its citizens. I will remember this!"

"Ding!"

System Notification: Achievement Points+400

I let out a sigh of relief. This entire night's worth of work has not gone to waste, and I didn't even get punished.

The old king coughed and continued, "My generals, the Dragonling Army has been creating chaos on the War God's River, and is like a tumor on this nation. We must deal with them quickly. What are your suggestions?"

Marquis Les held up his broken hand and stepped out from the line, "Your majesty, I previously had already sent out several units to counter the attacks of the Dragonling Army, but the empire has too few battleships to go against them. We would suffer a loss every time. It is only because of this that the Dragonling Army can act so recklessly. In my opinion, we should not carelessly charge in. We should place our priorities on the Hybrid Demon Territory in the north and not a mere ten thousand men for the Dragonling Army."

I furrowed my brow and muttered, "You actually want to leave them alone?"

Pearl whispered, "Don't say anything. Can't you tell that Father is already angry at you for making a move against the Long Spear Garrison without permission?"

I nodded, "I could tell...."

Pearl smiled, "Then why don't you act obediently and await for orders?!"

"Oh?"

Right as I pursed my lips at the thought, Crown Prince Theodore immediately stood up and said, "Father, we cannot ignore Dragonling Army. I suggest you immediately deploy an army to completely eliminate those pirates!"

The old king asked, “Who do you think we should send out?”

Theodore smiled, “The Royal Army’s Li Xiao Yao is talented in both strategy and in combat. Furthermore, his Royal Army already has 50,000 troops in their navy. They’ve even gone so far as to dig out a reservoir in their garrison to start training their navy troops. There is no better choice than the Royal Army!”

I wrinkled my brows. Looks like Theodore is really being considerate to the Royal Army by giving us this hard bone to chew.

The old king asked, “General Li, are you willing to accept this order?”

I immediately stepped up and replied, “I would be honored to help the empire put these rebels in their place.”

“Good!”

.....

“Ding!”

System Notification: You have received the SSS tier main military quest: [Eliminate the Dragonling Army]!

Quest Details: Lead the Royal Army in a campaign to eradicate the Dragonling Army. Bring back the head of the Dragonling Army Commander, Dragon Scale, to the palace as proof of completion. You will receive a very generous reward for your efforts. Please be careful, the Dragonling Army is much more terrifying than you can imagine!

Chapter 809: Higher Ambitions

This was a completely new concept as it was a main tier military quest. This was already different from the quests that normal players received. However, the rewards should be similar. The only difference would be the additional achievement points as a reward. With enough Achievement Points, I was bound to be promoted from my current military position. Yup, the higher the rank the better. This way, I could recruit even more soldiers into my army.

.....

Louis stepped out beside me and said, "Your majesty, the man responsible for these heinous crimes is General Yugo alone. Now that Yugo has already suffered his punishment, the rest of the soldiers are innocent. Your majesty, please have mercy!"

The old king nodded, "I will just pardon these five thousand men from the Long Spear Army."

Louis looked at me and then said, "But.... the armor, spears, mounts, and even the dozens of Dragon Crystal Cannons that the Long Spear Army possesses have already been moved. Your majesty, may you announce an order to the Royal Army to return everything to the Long Spear Army!"

I couldn't help but smile. You want me to give up something I've already swallowed? Dream on! I walked forward and said, "Your majesty, the Violent Thunder Army's Long Spear Garrison's base is near the War God's River, but they have yet to act in favor of the empire. Instead, they've completely wasted these machines that the empire has so generously bestowed upon them. My Royal Army on the other hand must set out to battle the Dragonling Army. If I return everything, I'll be an axe without a blade!"

King Rob smiled, "Li Xiao Yao, what's your point?"

I quickly responded, "I ask that your majesty bestow those equipments, armors, and cannons upon the Royal Army!"

Louis exclaimed, "Li Xiao Yao, you b*st*rd!"

Who would've imagined that the old king would say, "General Louis, the Royal Army is about to face a strong opponent, and as the old proverb goes, you must use the steel on the blade. Let us bestow this equipment onto them. I will prepare another set for the Long Spear Army from the treasury."

Louis went completely silent after that. There was nothing more he could say. All he could do was stand there, red with humiliation.

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie both hid their smiles behind me, while the five lieutenants of the Violent Thunder Army were completely pale. More likely than not, these five were not going to face a good fate with this mood of Louis'.

.....

After I walked out of the Great Hall, Pearl caught up to me and said, "You should've told me before you attacked the Violent Thunder Army. Otherwise, I would have known how to protect you."

I apologetically responded, "I apologize your highness, the situation at the time was too urgent and so I didn't wait. Instead, I led my men directly there."

Pearl helplessly replied, "Alright then, it's not like I don't know your personality. Whatever... I suppose this is a situation where the general must sometimes act without orders in a battle, eh? You are a man of great deeds, and you undoubtedly do not bother yourself with these administrative details. I can help you settle things in the palace. Li Xiao Yao, in return, you have to make the Royal Army into the most powerful army ever. That's right, I will soon write to Dragon City, I suppose I should praise you before Lady Frost..."

I smiled back, "Haha, is that right? Then, thank you your highness!"

"No need. Hurry up and prepare your men. Eliminating pirates will not be a simple task. Those men are incredibly cunning. In the past, both the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army attacked them at the same time,

deploying over seventy thousand troops onto the War God's River and they still weren't able to defeat them. You must be careful this time!"

"Okay, I understand!"

I leapt onto my horse and led Han Yuan and Xiao Lie back to the Royal Army Garrison. The five thousand soldiers from the Long Spear Garrison were returned to Louis. Louis was as sissy as ever and he kept fussing over the five thousand pieces of equipment and armor. I, on the other hand, did not pay any attention to him.

On the way there, I opened up my chat and saw that Li Mu and Qing Qian were in the middle of a discussion—

Qing Qian: "Looks like Achievement Points are better used for exchanging equipment...."

Li Mu: "Any player who isn't ranked in the top ten for Achievement Points don't even have a choice in the matter, alright?"

Wan Er: "But Drunken Spear managed to get a military position, not to mention he leapt up all the way to becoming a commander of an army in one step. He's almost the same rank as our pig!"

Wang Jian laughed, "They're completely different ok? Brother Xiao Yao's position is just too great! There are fifty thousand men in the Royal Army, ready at his beck and call. Furthermore, he's a Fourth Tier General of the South. Drunken Spear on the other hand, is at best a supervisor who's in charge of a garrison within the Xia Yu Army, with is at the Eighth Tier. He's miles and miles away from Brother Xiao Yao!"

I couldn't help but add, "Be nice, he's just starting..."

Qing Qian: "Well well, Brother Xiao Yao has finally appeared in the guild chat. Hurry up and tell us, what have you been up to these days?"

I was a little embarrassed and said, "After the Battle of the Sea of No Return, I've been constantly busy. The NPC army has just too many tasks. First, I need to replenish the Royal Army's equipment and treasury, and so I'll have to rely on all of you guys to continue building up [Zhan Long]!"

Wan Er smiled, “Don’t worry piggy, we’ve got it all set. You just focus on your Royal Army for now!”

Li Mu let out a long sigh and said, “Xiao Yao, as your brother, I have to be straight with you. Is it really worth it to spend this much time and effort on the Royal Army? Rather, I’m starting to think that with all that time you spend there, why don’t you take some of our [Zhan Long] brothers farming, or even spend more time with your goddess Cang Tong...”

I smiled, “Li Mu, you don’t understand. Let me ask you, later on, during the country wars, if we decide to invade the capital of another server, it’ll be easy to invade, but how easy will it be for us to maintain it?”

Li Mu was stunned and said, “Maintain it? Eh.... we can deploy some of our main troops to hold the place for a while. Either way, as long as they hold off any counterattacks, we’ll be fine!”

I smiled, “Alright then brother... when we invade Moon City, I’ll deploy two million players to guard the city. That’ll be enough to hold off any counterattacks, but what happens when we decide to take Port City? Or even Flame Cloud City? How many more times must we split our troops in order to hold these cities? If we split up our military strength like this, we’ll never be able to fight against a place like Port City which has over seven million people.”

Li Mu stiffened, “D*mn, when you say it like that...I guess I have been too simple-minded....”

I smiled, “Therefore, we need to start getting the core members of [Zhan Long] more involved in NPC military matters. If everyone was like me and managed to bring up their own NPC armies, then we could combine armies and have each stand guard at a capital. We wouldn’t even need players to be stationed there. Afterwards, these NPC armies will buy horses and supplies on their own and defend against any counterattack. That’s when we can truly claim that we’ve taken over a city!”

Li Mu sucked in a deep breath, “This...”

Wang Jian let out a sigh, “So... so Brother Xiao Yao was actually thinking

this far.... d*mn, I think that even Fang Ge Que or Q-Sword wouldn't have thought of this much....and they're even ranked higher than Brother Xiao Yao in the CBN Battlenet Rankings..."

I laughed, "Yeah, I'm aiming higher than Q-Sword and Jian Feng Han by New Year's in 2018. I no longer care about the wins and losses of a PK tournament or the rankings on the CBN Battlenet. What I want is the right to claim that I ruled the world!"

Qing Qian smiled, "New Year's? Brother Xiao Yao, something must've triggered this.... Sister Cang Tong, tell me, just what happened to him that night? If I remember correctly, you were with him that night...."

"Oh?" Dancing Forest smiled mischievously, "A lot of things must've happened that night then?"

Bai Qi laughed, "But of course.... Maybe something like popping a cherry!"

Wan Er was completely red and just mumbled something.

I face palmed, "You dirty b*st*rds. Looks like you don't want to be captains and flag bearers anymore, is that it? I can fire you all right now!"

"Guildmaster, you're the best, please spare us!"

.....

I talked with everyone in the guild chat for a little longer and praised them for their quests in Dragon City. It was good that they were getting as much Achievement Points as they could. Besides, these stats were interchangeable between Dragon City and Tian Ling City. Later on, if they wanted, they could get military positions with those points in Tian Ling City. Right now, there were already players starting to enter the ranks of the NPCs. For example, Simple, Jian Feng Han, Goodbye Tears, and Drunken Spear were all under the Xia Yu Army flag, while Fang Ge Que, Xia Ye, Mu Xuan, and Bai Li Ruo Feng were under the Flame Dragon Flag. There were some that had already become supervisors, while others were among the captains and the lieutenants. Not only could the players take on military officer positions, but they could also become the guild masters,

flag bearers, or captains of their guilds. In the eyes of the NPCs, we were like mercenaries with military ranks. So in all honesty, it was a mutually beneficial relationship.

Not long after, I arrived at the Royal Army Garrison. There was a long stretch of tents drying on the ground. Normally the tents would be lined up in neat rows, but Tian Ling City had the climate of a rainforest and was incredibly humid. Sleeping on the ground made the soldiers more susceptible to natural diseases. And so I suggested to Han Yuan that we begin cutting down trees to create wooden planks for beds. Furthermore, I suggested that they layer the beds into bunk beds. This way, a tent that could originally only hold a hundred of me could now hold two hundred. This would also improve the living conditions of the soldiers.

When I reached the camp, Long Xing walked his horse over to me and said, "Commander, the dock is already in the process of being built. Just this morning, a group of Dragonling battleships were monitoring us from afar, but I set up some cannons on the shore and scared them away."

I nodded, "Keep up the good work!"

Han Yuan raised his spear and furrowed his brow, "My lord, what are you thinking? The Dragonling Army is a group of pirates, and their movements on the river are completely random. The time it takes for us to build a dock is just too slow. Plus, with only a dozen or so ships in our possession, there's no way we can stand our ground against several hundred!"

I replied simple, "That's right, we can't!"

Long Xing asked, "Commander, then just how do you plan on exterminating this Dragonling Army?"

Xiao Lie was completely puzzled, "This is just too difficult a task... Commander, how can you be so certain, unless, you already have a plan? If you do, can you not hide it from us?"

I smiled, "Yes, I've figured out our first step."

"What are you planning?"

I confidently replied, “While the Dragonling Army seems to move randomly.... They must have some kind of port or dock along the shores in order to replenish their food, weapons, or women. As long as we search for that point, we can burn it all down and force them on the shore to fight with us. At that point, it’ll be time for our cavalry to show its might!”

Everyone was stunned. Some of the lieutenants were dumbfounded, “Lord commander, you’re truly wise...”

I picked up my Zhen Yue Blade and mounted my horse, feeling proud. The spring breeze lightly fluttered my Ruler’s Cape.

Chapter 810: Checkpoint

During lunch, I ate hot pot with Dong Cheng and Wan Er. After we came back, we discovered a pile of luggage indicating that Tang Qi had come back. That b*st*rd sure is energetic, coming back on the second day of the year.

That afternoon, I logged back online!

“Shua!”

I appeared outside of the Royal Army’s General’s Tent. Just in front of the garrison was the central camp. The central camp was made up of the cavalry and footsoldier units, while the left camp was made up of Long Xing’s Magic Flame Unit and the right camp was Xia Ye’s Star Rifle Unit. Fifty thousand troops were stationed at this garrison. The General’s Tent was the heart of the garrison, but it was very quiet and secluded. Han Yuan had prepared this tent for me, revealing that he thought of me as someone who preferred solitude.

When I walked out of the tent, one of the guards walked over to me and smiled, “General, you’re awake now?”

Looks like when players log off, the NPCs think that we’re sleeping.

I nodded, “Yup.”

The guard then candidly asked, “Commander, the other commanders usually have concubines living in their tents to accompany them. At the minimum there’s one, but there can also be several. From what I hear, his highness Theodore has seven concubines in his tent, while the second prince has four. Even the Marquis Louis has one famously spoiled concubine. So why is it that my lord’s tent completely empty?”

I let out a bitter laugh, must I do as the Romans do here as well? But I’m a man with a girlfriend. If Wan Er found out that I kept a concubine in my tent, it would be a miracle if she didn’t kill me. Plus, even if I were to bring a girl back to my quarters, it would be Wan Er. And so I shook my head with a smile, “Guard, do not worry about these matters. Naturally, I have a

girlfriend, but you do not need to know more.”

The guard stiffened. He clearly didn't know the concept of a girlfriend. Even so, he nodded his head and said, “Yes sir!”

I summoned my Flying Scythe Horse and galloped straight towards the training grounds. I could hear waves of shouts rising above the camp as I got closer. All of the barbarians in the Blade and Shield camp were training their defense and advance tactics. In the distance, I could see that the cavalymen were training their riding skills.

Han Yuan had his blade in hand and stood among the crowd of barbarians. He would slice at the shields at different angles, revealing any weak points in the formation. He was personally demonstrating these tactics. Even though he was a high-ranked general, he did not put on any airs and mixed right in with the soldiers. His strength was also increasing and he became more powerful as the days went by, making him one of the strongest experts in the Royal Army. Of course, that was excluding me, the commander. After all, I wasn't an NPC, and Han Yuan would never try to fight against me.

“The general is here!”

Han Yuan put down his blade and immediately walked over to me with his spear to welcome me, “General!”

I nodded in acknowledgement, “Are there any new developments?”

“I sent a recon team out this morning, but they haven't reported back yet.”

“Got it!”

.....

A few minutes later, a line of soldiers rode back into the camp, creating a cloud of dust. One of them stepped forward and said, “Commander, General, we've already scouted out the entire eastern shore of the War God's River, but we did not find any suspicious docks or ports. The only one we found was a port that was abandoned and had been burned down by the Dragonling Army about half a year ago. I believe that their

stronghold must be on the western banks!”

Han Yuan furrowed his brow and said, “The western shores of the War God’s River is all Xia Yu Army territory. Their garrison spans over several hundred square miles and is a critical resource for the empire. Logically speaking... based on the power of the Xia Yu Army, there’s no reason for them to tolerate the Dragonling Army on their territory... unless... his highness Prince Owen is like Yugo and has some backhanded deals with the Dragonling Army?”

I shook my head. “That’s impossible. Owen is a prince and has a very special position. He has no reason to collude with bandits. Besides, it’s not like Owen has a shortage of women or money. He has no need for that. Let’s investigate further before making any conclusions!”

“Yes sir!”

I continued supervising the training on the grounds. Every ten minutes, I earned +1 Achievement Points. Acting as the commander of the Royal Army was almost too easy. In addition, my experience almost came exclusively from completing quests. There was no need for me to personally go and farm monsters and BOSSes. Or, when I did kill BOSSes, they were top tier, like the Blood Giant Kehl. In that last battle in the Hybrid Demon Territory, the enemy sacrificed two king tier generals, so it was unlikely they would launch another invasion anytime soon.

Around an hour later, another recon team returned. They immediately knelt before me and reported back, “Commander, General, we surveyed the western shore and found something!”

I felt my heart leap and quickly replied, “Tell me!”

He politely replied, “There are three ports on the west banks of the War God’s River, and all of them are being used by the military to receive and ship resource shipments. Each one was guarded by 5000 soldiers and were set up with Dragon Crystal Cannons for defense. None of the Dragonling Army ships would dare come close. However,...under the protection of the Xia Yu Army, there is a small fisherman’s village that built a port. The villagers buy and sell food, fodder, steel and other goods. I

asked around and found that every week, the Dragonling Army would send men there to trade with the villagers for weapons and food. It does appear that this village's livelihood is almost entirely based on the business that the Dragonling Army brings. All of the fishermen have become businessmen, and their young men, blacksmiths. That's right, the village is called 'Danyan Village'. The village chief is the younger brother of the marquis and the cousin of General Louis. His name is Lucen!"

"Lucen?"

Han Yuan knitted his brows, "Why is it him?"

"Who's Lucen?" I asked.

Han Yuan replied, "General, you may not have heard about it. Lucen is around thirty years old, but he was once a famous general. At the young age of 21, he had already climbed his way to becoming a general. He was history's youngest high general. However, as time went on, the differences in his thinking with Prince Theodore became apparent, and he lost his position as a military officer, forced to retire. From then on, he disappeared. I never would have imagined that he'd become a chief of a village!"

I asked, "Lucen, is he very strong?"

Xiao Lie replied, "He's smart and talented in the martial arts, and is one of the most superior officers of the empire. His character, however, is cruel and shortsighted. During his short tenure, he managed to offend a great number of people. Furthermore, he's extremely greedy. Even though he knew that the Dragonling Army was buying weapons and selling loot that they had stolen from the villagers, he'd rather take the money than care about the villagers. In his heart, honor and kindness hold no weight."

Han Yuan then went to ask the scout, "How many villagers are there in Danyan Village?"

"Around a thousand!"

"So it's like that..." Han Yuan furrowed his brow, "General, if I'm correct, I believe that these thousand men are veterans from Lucen's old army.

They should all be brave and strong warriors.... If we want to pluck off Danyan Village, then we have to face these men. My lord, you must consider this carefully. Lucen may be many times more powerful than what we imagine him to be!"

I nodded, "Even if he is, we still must fight him! Start picking out the troops, we need ten thousand elite soldiers and they have to be able to move fast. We'll get to Danyan Village at the fastest possible speed and destroy that stronghold! I don't care who Lucen is, but if he dares to help the Dragonling Army, then we'll eliminate him!"

"Yes sir!"

.....

Not long after, ten thousand cavalymen set out from the garrison. This time, they were all equipped with light leather armor. While their defense was much lower than when they're dressed in heavy armor, they could move much faster. This also reduced the stress on our mounts. Each man was equipped with bows, lances, and swords so that they could fight in long range battles and close combat.

All of the men brought three days worth of rations with them before galloping off. Under my command, we passed through the Broken Blade Canyon, over the Bridge of Fate, and into the Blood Demon Forest. I could see some [Zhan Long] players training in the distance and even recognized quite a few of them. They happily waved to me, "Guildmaster, are you off to fight another war?!"

I smiled back, "Yup, keep on working hard! You'll only get girls that way!"

"But of course we have to grind levels. Nevermind about getting girls, I'm too poor for that...."

I was speechless.

.....

Not long after, the ten thousand soldiers of the Royal Army passed by the Xia Yu Army camp. A checkpoint was set up along the road with a

group of Xia Yu Army guards holding it. They walked up to us and a lieutenant addressed us directly, “Who are you, report your position and name!”

Han Yuan immediately stepped forward, “The Commander of the Royal Army, the General of the South Li Xiao Yao is leading troops to complete a mission. Can you please let us through!”

“Royal Army?”

The lieutenant smirked, “Well well, so it was the Royal Army that performed so well at the Sea of No Return. What, have you decided to sink your claws into the Xia Yu Army territory as well? You Royal Army folk are truly incredible, you don’t even respect the Crown Prince and the Second Prince. You want to pass through our checkpoint? I have to apologize! Why don’t you go to the right and pass through the desert!”

Han Yuan angrily rammed his spear against the ground, “You want to die? You actually dare to act so arrogant before us!”

I quickly chided him, “Han Yuan, don’t be rash!”

Han Yuan was a strong general, but he was a hot-blooded man. Nobody else but me could keep him back. I managed to stop him in his place with that one order. Xiao Lie couldn’t help but joke, “Old Han, you airhead, you were stopped by a single word from the commander!”

Han Yuan spun around and said, “I only follow the commander....”

Xiao Lie raised his blade and walked over, “Sir Flag Bearer, I am a general of the Royal Army, Xiao Lie. Could you please let us through? We have a critical mission to attend to and we must pass through!”

Logically speaking, a lieutenant is much lower than a general, but this lieutenant was too arrogant and haughty said, “What you going to do to me if I don’t?”

Xiao Lie was a prudent man and immediately charged forward, “Then I’ll cut you down!”

.....

Right then, a Xia Yu Army soldier charged forward. He was a player. I could see the insignia of his unit on his shoulder. He raised his spear and shouted, “Xu Yu, do not be impudent! Let them through!”

The lieutenant called Xu Yu turned around. When he saw the man, his tone immediately changed, “But supervisor, this is Xia Yu Army territory, how can we let the Royal Army soldiers do what they want here?”

The player smiled, “Don’t worry, I’m friends with Li Xiao Yao, do not disobey him!”

“Yes sir!”

I led my horse forward and smiled, “Drunken Spear, looks like you’ve become accustomed to the Xia Yu Army...”

Drunken Spear smiled wryly, “Motherf*cker, I set up an entire camp here, but we’re just being used like guards. Nothing as impressive as you....”

I laughed, “Alright already, I’m here for a military quest. When I come back, I’ll properly thank you!”

“Good luck!”

“As if I need it...”

Chapter 811: True Heavy Cavalrymen

We dashed down the road through the Xia Yu Army lands. As we continued forward, the fragrant scent of oilseed wafted past our faces. Glancing over the horizon, there were endless fields of crops. No matter the season, the fields were always in use. Moreover, it was now spring, just the season for oilseed flowers. I pointed ahead with my Dragon Reservoir Sword and shouted, "Notify all the troops to take care and avoid stomping on the fields!"

Han Yuan nodded, "Understood!"

One after another, the order passed down the ranks. The Royal Army Horsemen filed into narrow rows and stayed within the bounds of the little path, taking care to not step on a single crop. I could see in Han Yuan's eyes that his respect for me had risen yet again. The warrior came from very modest roots, having grown up in a poverty-stricken village. Throughout his entire life, this must be the first time he had met a commander like me.

After another twenty minutes, the target on our map appeared before our eyes. It was around two thousand yards away from us. We were already past the military fields and had now entered a field blooming with flowers and willow trees. Glancing at the map, I noticed several small red dots in our vicinity. I raised my brow and said, "A small fishing village like this actually has scouts in the area? Looks like this really is Lucen's headquarters!"

Han Yuan replied, "Lucen was a former general, and he must be used to the military lifestyle. Besides, if this is the location where he and the Dragonling Army conduct business, he must also be guarding against any threats and potential risks. It is only natural that he post some scouts in the area."

I gripped my sword and ordered, "Spread out and clear out the scouts. We must not alarm them. I, for one, am not interested in fighting against this Lucen head on!"

“Yes sir!”

Han Yuan understood the underlying meaning to my command. Our mission this time was to ambush the enemy and make Lucen’s thousand man army surrender as quickly as possible. Otherwise, if we gave him a chance to prepare, the Royal Army would take heavy losses. While the Royal Army was strong, it was unlikely that we could leave a battle against a famous general unscathed.

When we were five hundred yards out, I spotted a young man sitting in the trees. He was donned in light leather armor, and he carried a bow in hand. He was clearly not one of the villagers, and he looked more like a scout from the military. I leapt up onto my horse, and snowflakes dispersed and surrounded the two of us. [Ice Wings] sprouted from my back and I sped right towards the little forest like a bolt of light!

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie raised their swords and charged after me. There were a total of seven scouts posted outside the village. We couldn’t give them the slightest opportunity to release a warning. Otherwise, our ambush would become a failure.

The young scout turned his head while sitting in the tree, but by the time he noticed me, it was all too late. His eyes widened and he shouted, “D*mm*t, why are the military dogs here?!”

I didn’t give him the chance to react and immediately released a Level 13 [Combo] directly onto his body. His light leather armor was split open from the power of the attack. The youngster was a Level 153 Titan Tier. “Pa Pa!” He quickly released two arrows. Unfortunately for him, they clashed against my armor and dealt very little damage. I then threw another slash with my Zhen Yue Blade. The b*st*rd was at the end of his life and with a howl, he fell from the willow tree. He even dropped an Emperor Tier chest plate. I picked it up and threw it into my bag. Since I now have the Holy Dragon Cauldron, my potions don’t take up space in my bag anymore!

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie were finishing up the scouts on both sides. The other four had been shot down by the Royal Army horsemen; their bodies

looked like hedgehogs. Not a single one of them had the time to signal their friends in the village, much less send a report.

Lucen was truly a talented general. Even though he was now living in this hole, he was still constantly prepared to the point where he posted scouts at the gates. Unfortunately for him, the heavens were not on his side. It had just recently rained and grounds were muddy, softening the sound of the horse hooves.

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We soon reached the outskirts of the village.

Xiao Lie glanced around and carefully observed the situation inside the village, "It looks like they already have some preparations in place!"

A few of the Royal Army Horsemen who were walking in front of the unit suddenly fell into the ground. Just as Xiao Lie had warned, there were traps set up all around the village. Han Yuan immediately reacted and shouted, "All of you, rush forward, we have to move fast!"

A dozen or so of the Royal Army Horsemen charged forward until they safely crossed the field towards the village without falling into a trap. However, once they reached the gates, hundreds of arrows flew at them, even killing the horses.

Han Yuan clenched his teeth, "Cavalrymen, charge!"

Behind us, a hundred or so horsemen carrying heavy shields charged forth. I also led a group of men and followed close behind. We moved swiftly, so there was no way Lucen would be completely prepared for this!

As I predicted, the first row of heavy horsemen successfully made it past the volley of arrows, deflecting all attacks. However, the arrows were rather chaotic, and they didn't deal much damage and they certainly couldn't pierce through the shields of our cavalry. Not far from us, I could see the small huts buzzing with activity. Quite a few of the fishermen's clothes were unkempt. Rather, they turned out to be soldiers as they ran at us with swords. Even though they had prepared for situations like this, we still had the advantage in our ambush.

“Careful, they’re heavy armor cavalrymen!”

One of the soldiers shouted, “Shield Spear men, lead the charge. Archers, cover them from both sides. Make sure to aim at their eyes and blind them! We’ll turn them into headless flies!”

Han Yuan quickly countered the order, “Raise your shields and rush forward once you’ve determined my direction!”

In the distance, a group of the Danyan soldiers began rushing towards us with heavy shields and spears in hand. Once they set down their shields and created a wall, they immediately began launching their spears at our horsemen. They were more like steel lances than spears. Since most of a spear’s body was made of wood, it was very easy for cavalrymen to knock them out of the air. However, it was a different story for lances. The only problem was that they required too much steel to make, so it wasn’t a standard weapon.

Just the fact that Lucen had managed to obtain enough steel in such a small fisherman village was enough to demonstrate his depth and skill.

Han Yuan personally led the unit of cavalrymen in the charge. They managed to break through the first layer of defenses among the enemy Shield Spear units. However, while in the process, quite a few of our cavalrymen and horses sustained injuries. Even losses were sustained by the second layer of defense. Han Yuan swung his long spear, throwing one of the enemies into the air. After he pulled his spear out, he stabbed it into another soldier and instantly killed him.

The cost of building up a heavy cavalry was incredibly high. From training costs to battle horses, armor, and equipment, just one heavy cavalryman cost 5 to 8 times that of a normal spear soldier. Lucen’s choice of battle was an impressive trade-off. If he managed to fight this battle at one spear soldier for each cavalryman, then he’d have made it big time. Even if it was just a two to one or a three to one ratio, he’d still be profiting.

Unfortunately, this kind of trade-off only worked in margins. Against a large scale cavalry unit like the Royal Army, Lucen’s couple hundred long

spear soldiers were nothing.

Finally, after the Royal Army lost around twenty cavalrymen, we charged through the enemy defenses, leaving five hundred corpses in our wake.

I pointed i the distance and commanded, “Han Yuan, take a thousand men and seal the ports. Make sure you don’t flash the Royal Army flags. We’ll take Danyan Village without a sound!”

“Yes sir!”

Han Yuan lead his men over while Xiao Lie and I continued with our fighting. As they fought, I sent another order, giving my men the option to capture enemy combatants alive. After all, this was the utmost amount of mercy that the Royal Army could give.

In the midst of the clash, I heard the sound of hooves down the little street through the village. I looked over only to see a unit of horsemen arriving to my surprise. They were all dressed in standard equipment, each carrying a halberd and a small shield. A tube of arrows, a longbow, and a battle axe hung from the saddle of the horses. Their red armor looked to be expertly made and didn’t look to be much weaker than that of the Royal Army.

Leading the unit was a man carrying a sword in one hand and a heavy shield in other. A steel helmet covered his face, but I could see the sharp eyes underneath. With a cold smile, he said, “Have the dogs of the empire finally arrived? So this little fisherman village of mine has finally peaked your interest!”

Xiao Lie roared, “Lucen, weren’t you once a man of the military? Why would you dishonor such a reputation and lower yourself to the level of the Dragonling Army? Do you even understand how many innocent lives were taken by their hands? Do you know just how many villages have lived in fear of their terror all these years?”

“But of course.”

Lucen’s voice was a chilling calm, “So what of that. What do they have to do with me?”

“Keng!”

I pulled out my Dragon Reservoir Sword and cracked my whip, “Let’s not waste our breaths.... Prepare to attack and take Lucen’s head!”

The soldiers behind me whooped and began preparing their [Charge]. Lucen raised his shield in preparation with a smile, “Alright, then let me show you little princelings of the Royal Army what a true Heavy Cavalryman of the empire is really like!”

The horses whinnied and the decisive battle began!

I could tell that as Lucen directed the charge, he shifted his shield forward quite a bit. Furthermore, the front row of cavalymen maintained a strong line, maximizing the momentum of their impact.

In the blink of an eye, the two sides clashed. “Peng peng peng!” The shields rang from impact. I let my Zhen Yue Blade fly out into the air, splitting the two forces. I activated [Black Tortoise Realm] simultaneously, decreasing the enemy’s movement speed. I swung my Dragon Reservoir Sword, throwing a [Seven Star Fragment Slash] into the mass of soldiers. As all of this happened, my [Ice Spear] raged through the enemy lines, freezing the soldiers in their tracks, giving my soldiers an opportunity to attack.

With this one clash, the Royal Army did take some losses. I could see spears plunged through quite a few of them. Once their spears left their hands, Lucen’s horsemen would pull out their battle axes and begin slashing at us. This took out dozens more of our horsemen. The battle axes had extremely high killing potentials, and they were very portable and versatile. Lucen was quite the strategist.

Even so, the gap in our numbers was too great. After the first charge of two thousand Royal Army Horsemen, Lucen was left with a little over twenty men. Furthermore, Lucen’s own health had dropped quite a bit after fighting with our soldiers. He was a Demon Harvest tier demi-BOSS, the same power ranking as Han Yuan. There was no way he’d be able to take on so many attacks at once.

Chapter 812: On the Qui Vive

“Ready, and charge!”

Lucen raised his sword high above his head. Blood was splattered across his face. “I will kill every single last one of you dogs. My conviction will never waver!”

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and coldly replied, “A conviction that threatens the lives of peaceful villagers living alongside the War God’s River, ignoring the massacres of bystanders, and allowing such rampant behavior is no conviction at all!”

Lucen stiffened and clenched his teeth, “Kneeling to the winner, is that not the way of the world? I never would have thought that the Royal Army would strengthen itself to this point. Youngster, what is your name?”

I raised my arm and said, “What point is there in telling you? A cold-blooded slaughterer like you doesn’t deserve to know! Royal Army men, raise your bows and target their eyes!”

All of the soldiers behind me pulled out their bows. “Thunk!” One after another, a storm of arrows fell upon the enemy troops. Even Lucen and his personal guard took several arrows. With a howl, he knelt to the ground with blood pooling underneath him. Xiao Lie led a unit of soldiers and charged ahead. Seeing his body still jerking, they charged forward to deal the final blow.

Han Yuan also led a group of his men forward and said, “General, we’ve captured a total of a hundred of their soldiers. How should we deal with them? Execution?”

I shook my head, “No need, they were once men of the empire’s military after all. Imprison them all. Afterwards, we’ll interrogate all of them. We need to find out the details of their relationship with the Dragonling Army. Additionally, we need to find out just when the next shipment is.”

Han Yuan smiled and nodded, “Understood. General, don’t worry, we’ll find out very soon!”

...

I followed Han Yuan over to see how he was planning on interrogating these men. I saw the enemy soldiers tied up and kneeling in a row on the ground. Han Yuan shouldered his long blade and said, "Now squeal, when are the Dragonling men coming?"

A soldier around fifty years old was furious and spat at Han Yuan, "Don't know. I won't answer to a dog of the empire!"

I walked up with a cold smile, "So we're dogs of the empire, but at the very least we don't kill civilians. What about you guys? You helped the Dragonling Army kill innocent villagers. What does that make you?"

The old man was forced into silence by my accusations.

Han Yuan narrowed his eyes at one of the other prisoners and roared, "Well, are you going to spill or not? Otherwise, I'll slash you down in one strike!"

The young soldier was around twenty years old and he was paralyzed by fear. He must have been one of the newer soldiers recruited from a nearby village. Ashen, he replied, "I.... I don't know anything..."

Han Yuan licked his lips, "Is that so? Well, does he know?"

He pointed at the old soldier from before. Han Yuan whipped out his blade, and in a quick slice, the old man's head rolled to the ground. I furrowed my brow. Han Yuan had struck too quickly. I didn't even have the chance to stop him. Besides, the old man probably hadn't directly participated in the massacres. At the very least, it was clear he had his own set of morals and values. It was a pity for him to have died.

With the death of the old soldier, the young man's face turned green and he stuttered, "I'll tell you, but will you spare me?"

Han Yuan nodded, "We will!"

The new recruit trembled, "The men from the Dragonling Army... they just came this morning and told us to prepare weapons and provisions. Tomorrow, they were planning on raiding one of the Xia Yu Army

warehouses...”

Han Yuan was stunned, “What? What kind of steel balls do these guys have to actually dare to touch one of their warehouses...”

“Really... it’s true. At least that’s what they said...”

With my Zhen Yue Blade in hand, I leaned in close to the new recruit and smiled, “Do you know which warehouse? The Xia Yue Army has dozens of them, and they’ve even got a few towns full of soldiers.”

The little soldier shook his head fiercely, “That... I really don’t know. They never mentioned specifically which one. I only found that much out when one of the officers started spouting nonsense after drinking too much...”

Han Yuan asked, “Then did they say how many people they were going to use for this operation?”

The soldier shook his head, “I really don’t know...”

I looked over at Xiao Lie and asked, “Give a report on the Xia Yu Army warehouses.”

Han Yuan replied, “The Xia Yu Army has a total of fourteen warehouses in town centers. Each town is built out of stone. In addition, there are the three towns with armed forces. Each of them holds around ten thousand or so civilians. Lord Commander, I believe that if they want to attack one of the two thousand man warehouse towns, then they would have to use at least two or three times their numbers. In other words, to attack just one of the warehouses, the entire Dragonling Army would have to be mobilized.”

I nodded with a smile, “Alright, I was waiting for an opportunity like this!”

Han Yuan wryly smiled, “Kid, did that Dragonling Army man not say why they were planning on ambushing a Xia Yu Army warehouse?”

The soldier trembled even harder. He glanced back at the headless corpse and said, “They, they said that recently a meddlesome Royal Army

appeared, wrecking the agreement they had with the Violent Thunder Army. Not to mention that they took a few of their boats to set up a dock and a garrison on the eastern banks. The risk was too great for them to continue operations on that side. As such, the Dragonling Army's commander, Dragon Scale, decided to launch an ambush. The best target was the Xia Yu Army warehouse. They were going to fill seventy ships with the rations from that. That way they would have enough so they wouldn't have to land on either of the War God's River banks for another three years."

I was stunned. The AI of these NPCs is just too high! If I hadn't launched this attack on Danyan village, I never would have imagined that the Dragonling Army would choose the Xia Yu Army as their next target!

Han Yuan raised his long blade and said, "General, should we tell the Xia Yu Army? Give them a chance to prepare!"

I asked, "What do you guys think?"

Xiao Lie shook his head, "We absolutely cannot. While we know for a fact that there aren't any Dragonling Army spies within the Royal Army, we cannot ensure the same for the Xia Yu Army. Once word leaks out, then we'll lose all chances to root them out!"

I smiled, "Xiao Lie is right. We can't let anyone know. This piece of news will only circulate within our group. Before dawn tomorrow, quarantine all people who know of this."

Xiao Lie clenched his teeth and drew a line across his neck, "Lord Commander, the best action to take is actually...."

I softened and looked down, "Don't I know that? However, I am not willing to become someone who is like that. If I did, what difference is there between me and Theodore, Owen, or Louis?"

Xiao Lie's eyes softened and he smiled back, "Alright, we will follow your orders, no matter where it takes us!"

Han Yuan replied, "But there are so many warehouses, just which one is their target?"

I confidently replied, "The warehouse closest to the shore but furthest from the Xia Yu Army port is their target. The Dragonling Army would never ambush a warehouse too far inland. After all, it would be inconvenient to move all of those provisions. Besides, they wouldn't be able to pull from a battle against the Xia Yu Army unscathed. They aren't so stupid as to try a maneuver like that. Xiao Lie, what do you think, which warehouse is it?"

Xiao Lie confidently replied, "Based on the conditions that General laid out, the most probable target is "Greene Town". That town is incredibly far from all of the stations and outposts and it's fairly far from the port. Moreover, it's less than twenty minutes from the river banks. Ambushing Greene Town would be the most optimal course of action. Of course, all of this is under the assumption that the Xia Yu Army has not set up a defense."

I replied, "That's no problem... More likely than not, they'll ambush at night, isn't that right?"

Han Yuan nodded firmly, "They will!"

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On the spot, I ordered, "Tomorrow morning, all Royal Army Troops will be on standby. Eat a little more for breakfast and bring a day's worth of rations with you. We'll circle around the desert. Take care to not arouse any attention from the Xia Yu Army. We'll pass through the fields to avoid attention. During that moment all cavalymen will dismount. I expect complete silence from all soldiers. And full attentiveness from everyone. We must be ready for an ambush at any moment. Scouts in plainclothes will be sent out ahead. Once we've confirmed that the Dragonling Army soldiers have disembarked their ships, our cavalry will immediately cut off all retreat while the foot soldiers will surround the town. Not a single one will escape!"

Han Yuan excitedly raised a fist, "Yes sir!"

Time in the game passed by four times more quickly than in real life. A day's worth of time was around six hours in real life. As such, I still had

six hours left to handle other errands. Not to mention it was time for dinner in real life. This also meant that I needed to be up and ready to direct the Royal Army around midnight. Well, it'd be well worth it if we could root out the Dragonling Army!

I continued making preparations. Once Danyan Village was dealt with, I left some of the prisoners behind to act as iron smiths and fishermen, along with a thousand other Royal Army soldiers to mix in with the villagers. This was to ensure that nothing would be leaked to the pirates. Once all of those preparations were complete, I sat at the edge of the bank and couldn't help but chuckle at myself. I was becoming more and more like a commander. Compared to little squad leader Li Xiao Yao, I was becoming more and more suitable for the role as commander of the Royal Army!

“Ding!”

A message came into my inbox from Wan Er, “Pig! It's time to log off and eat dinner!”

I quickly logged off from the field and splashed some water on my face before going downstairs. We picked a nearby claypot restaurant to eat dinner. Dong Cheng, Wan Er, and Tang Qi all came along. After ordering a few dishes, we talked and joked for a while.

Wan Er asked, “Pig, what have you been doing all day with the Royal Army?”

I replied, “Ah, just taking the soldiers around to build our strength... I've noticed that taking them along on quests and killing monsters has been very helpful in leveling them up. Not long from now, the Royal Army forces will probably be on par with that of a Level 7 Hybrid Demon. At that point, they'll be a great help in the Country Wars!”

Wan Er grinned, “Alright then, it's like you're possessed!”

Tang Qi added, “Actually, Xiao Yao isn't the only one. I heard that Q-Sword has been completely focused on earning Achievement Points. He's now a captain, and will probably rise up to become a lieutenant soon. He's fairly quick at clearing quests. Once he gets close to Prince Theodore, he'll

undoubtedly have a smooth ride up. Much like you, Li Xiao Yao.”

I smiled, “Fang Ge Que is already a supervisor in the Flame Dragon Army. If Q-Sword keeps this trajectory up, he might have to fight it out with Fang Ge Que to see who ranks higher. It will definitely be a nasty battle.”

Tang Qi smiled, “Well, none of them have it as good as you do in the Royal Army. You’re an official commander of an army, fourth tier General of the South!”

I narrowed my eyes at him, “Then what about you?”

“Me? Oh, I’m just a team leader in the Flame Dragon Army...”

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Once we finished dinner, at Dong Cheng’s request, we went out to KTV for some karaoke. The two girls were giggling from all the fun. As it got close to eleven, I urged them home. Besides, I needed to get back and meet the Dragonling Army in an hour. I couldn’t be late for that. Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Lie were right in the midst of preparing for battle while I, the commander, was escorting two pretty ladies to sing and play. It was truly inexcusable!

Once we returned home, I darted back and immediately logged on!

Chapter 813: Surrender, Or Die!

“Shua!”

After I logged on, my character appeared in the middle of a field. When I woke up, I startled two sleeping bees. They buzzed near my ear and then flew off into the distance. Looking out, I saw Han Yuan and Xiao Lie leading an uncountable number of Royal Army soldiers concealed behind the tall crops. Under these extraordinary conditions, we had no choice but to step into the fields. If we could root out the Dragonling Army, then sacrificing this entire field of military crops would be well worth it. Not to mention that all 50,000 of the Royal Army soldiers were gathered in one place. We wouldn't be trampling too much of the field.

Han Yuan led his horse over to me with his blade in hand. The horse's muzzle had been tied shut so that it wouldn't make a sound. Despite the muzzle, the horse instinctively reached for the crops, trying to bite at them. Seeing this, I couldn't help but feel pity for it. Han Yuan wryly smiled, “General, we've been lying in wait for almost an entire day and we haven't seen even a single hair of those Dragonling soldiers. Do you suppose those morons are actually not coming?”

I furrowed my brows, “They should be. We haven't let any news out. Besides, now that the Royal Army has declared war on them, if I were the Dragonling Army commander, I would conduct one last raid before disappearing into the wind.”

Xiao Lie nodded, “My lord is correct, let's just patiently wait for news!”

About ten minutes later, one of the disguised cavalymen ran over to us and quietly reported, “Lord Commander, some Dragonling warships have appeared on the War God's River!”

“How many?” Han Yuan asked.

“Twenty-one!”

“Only twenty-one?” Han Yuan was puzzled.

I replied, “Wait a little longer!”

After a while, another scout reported back, “General, fifty-four total Dragonling warships have appeared on the river!”

I asked, “How far up is the water displaced by the boat?”

“Fairly far, the ships seem to be carrying a lot of weight!”

“Good...”

After seven to eight minutes, a third scout excitedly reported back, “General, eighty-one ships have appeared on the river!”

Hearing this, Ha Yuan’s spirits were considerably higher, “Great. Looks like the entire hive has come out. General, this was a good gamble!”

Long Xing was sharpening his blade on the side and smiled, “When should we set out? My sword is feeling thirsty...”

I replied, “Wait a little longer. We’ll set out after all of them have landed!”

“Yes sir!”

A group of lieutenants was hidden in the crops, waiting for orders from us. Not long after, another scout came back with a report, “General, five of the warships have landed on the beach. Around two thousand cavalrymen have disembarked and are heading straight for Greene Town!”

I nodded, “Continue observing!”

Han Yuan quietly asked, “These two thousand cavalrymen must be there to ambush the town. The other eight thousand foot soldiers are for escorting the loot back, right?”

I smiled, “Yup. Let’s wait for the eight thousand to land. That’s when we’ll begin our move.”

Long Xing said, “General, we await your orders!”

I slid down my horse and smiled with my hand on my hilt, “I will give orders in a moment. Han Yuan, you will lead the Royal Army cavalrymen to cut off the Dragonling Army from retreating. Xia Ye will then lead ten thousand men out to take their ships. Best case scenario, we’ll be able to

take all eighty-one of them. If they resist too much, then we'll burn the remaining ships. Xiao Lie and Long Xing will then lead thirty thousand men to surround the town. We cannot let a single rat out!"

All of the generals nodded, "Understood!"

Not long after, another scout reported back, "All eighty-one ships have landed, however, each ship has a unit of people have been left behind to guard them. They have a total of thirty Dragon Crystal Cannons and they're all ready to fire!"

I pondered for a moment. After five minutes, I shouted orders, "Royal Army, advance!"

"Yes sir!"

Han Yuan and I led a group of cavalymen and charged out of the fields. The horses trampled over the crops. Once we rushed out, we could see the numerous Dragonling warships along the shores. Most of their men had disembarked and were moving towards Greene Town. The Royal Army cavalry dashed out and cut into the space between them and their ships like lightning.

"D*mm*t!"

One of the pirates paled, "We've been tricked! Those d*mn*d Royal Army soldiers are ambushing us! This time we're done for. Messengers, let Lord Dragonscale know!"

Unfortunately for them, the Royal Army was faster. All of our soldiers pulled out their weapons and charged ahead. On land, the pirates didn't even have half the speed or battle prowess of Lucen's men. Our arrival was enough to completely break their morale. Our men hacked through their rear while the front of their army was thrown into chaos. Half of them tried to fight back while the other half ran to Greene Town to recruit help.

I led a group of heavy cavalymen and charged towards Greene Town. When I glanced back, I saw a mass of Star Rifle Camp soldiers already launching their attack against the ships. Like a tide, they flooded the ships

and took control of them one by one. After this battle, it was without a doubt that the Royal Army navy would become the strongest in all of Tian Ling City. Even the Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army navies wouldn't be on par with us!

In the distance, Greene Town came into view over the horizon. The town walls were only three meters high, and it looked almost like a toy. Countless Dragonling pirates had already taken control of the town and were in the midst of battle against the Xia Yu Army. The Royal Army foot soldiers had already surrounded the small town. This time, the Dragonling Army was doomed.

“Hua!”

My horse disappeared from underneath me and I flew into the air. I led the cavalymen straight towards the masses of enemy soldiers. At the same time, I could see a general swinging his blade and charging through the crowds of people. It was the commander of the Dragonling Army, Dragonscale. He was the legendary chief of the bandits. Our strategy this time was to hit hard and fast, otherwise our losses would become too great!

Dragonscale spotted me from a distance and was immediately inflamed, “The commander of the Royal Army, Li Xiao Yao? That motherf*cker, fight me!”

Without another word, I mustered my strength and shot forward, right at Dragonscale. With my blade raised above my head, I focused on the strength in my arms, slashing straight down at the enemy!

“Keng!”

Our two attacks clashed, creating a small shockwave. All the Dragonling soldiers around us were pushed out. Dragonscale himself was thrown back against the city wall. The Dragonling soldiers were stunned by the scene. One of them gaped, “Heavens above,...Lord Dragonscale was actually pushed back. Just how fearsome is the General of the South....”

I smiled and activated my [Ice Wings]. I rushed forward at full speed, preparing another attack. If I couldn't push back Dragonscale with all of

these conditions, then I don't deserve to muddle my way through Tian Ling City!

I raised my left palm towards the sky. Storm clouds suddenly gathered in the sky, creating bolts of lightning. The earth around us began to shudder and a bolt of lightning shot down. Countless lightning dragons snaked through the crowd of people, unleashing their wrath. These Dragonling soldiers were nothing but phonies. How could they stand up against the power of a real dragon!

In the blink of an eye, everybody in the area was dead except for Dragonscale!

With my sword in hand, I leapt up into the sky and came to a standing point around a hundred meters in the air. The silver wings on my back flapped. I looked down at the Dragonling Army and shouted, "All men who surrender will be spared! Otherwise, kill all enemy combatants!"

My powerful voice resounded across the battlefield, shocking the Dragonling soldiers into a standstill. Despair filled their eyes. Even Dragonscale was stunned.

"Bang...."

One of the Dragonling officers' blades fell to the ground. Closely following that, many others clanked. Han Yuan and the others didn't stop their massacre, they killed a couple hundred more soldiers before I stopped them.

Dragonscale laughed bitterly at the sky, "Brothers, nevermind.... Looks like our Dragonling Army has finally met its end. We walked right into a trap. I apologize, everyone. If you become prisoners, you have a chance of surviving. I hope to meet you all again in the next life!"

As he said that, Dragonscale raised his blade and swiped it right across his throat. Blood burst forward, and just like that, this Demon Harvest tier BOSS committed suicide!

I was speechless. I walked over, picked up Dragonscale's head, and put it into my bag. This was proof of the completion of my mission. I wouldn't

let anybody else touch it, or else I wouldn't get my reward.

At the foot of the city walls, around five thousand of the remaining Dragonling soldiers were captured. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie captured each and every one of them. Right then, a unit of horsemen suddenly thundered towards us from a distance. It was the Xia Yu Army cavalry, led by second prince Owen. When he saw the situation at Greene Town, he couldn't help but exclaim, "General Li Xiao Yao, you... you've already defeated the Dragonling Army?"

I shook my head, "No, not yet, I will be taking these prisoners back to the Tian Ling Empire and I will await the king's decision."

"Alright!"

Owen glanced at the bloodshed on the ground and suddenly glared at me, "Did you receive news of this beforehand?"

I nodded, "Yes sir!"

"Then why did you not contact the Xia Yu Army beforehand so that my army wouldn't have taken such great losses?" Owen was clearly enraged.

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and softly said, "I deeply apologize, your highness. I didn't receive news until the last minute, and had no choice but to deploy troops before I could contact you. I hope that your highness would understand."

Owen coldly laughed, "I understand. Li Xiao Yao, you are truly a natural strategist!"

I didn't respond.

Han Yuan probably couldn't stand the fact that I was being ridiculed like this and stepped forward, "Your highness, our general rushed over to root out the Dragonling Army. This should be considered a great achievement. After all, the Royal Army has completed a task that the Xia Yu Army and the Flame Dragon Army together have not been able to complete. Your highness, it is just as you say, General Li Xiao Yao is a true strategist!"

Owen scoffed, "Han Yuan, is this the place for you to speak?"

I didn't let him say anymore and ordered, "Royal Army, escort the prisoners back to the capital!"

This time, we didn't take the Bridge of Fate. Instead, we rode on the eighty-one warships that Xia Ye had captured. After three trips, we shipped sixty thousand men to the other side of the riverbank.

In this battle, the Royal Army lost a total of a thousand men. It was truly a grand victory! This was also my ultimate goal: training soldiers while not taking losses. Otherwise, if we kept participating in battles like the Sea of No Return, then only half of our soldiers would level up, while the other half would die. The Royal Army would never grow stronger at that rate.

Chapter 814: Another Expedition

We escorted five thousand or so Dragonling prisoners back to the capital. As we neared the gate, the guards' jaws dropped. Dragonscale's head was slightly poking out of my bag. I led forty thousand soldiers into the capital and walked straight towards the Royal Palace. If I received the quest from here, it only makes sense that I turn the quest in through here as well.

.....

Within the Grand Hall, the old king was in the middle of his daily meeting with his advisors. Pearl, Theodore, and Owen were all present. There were even a few players who were receiving quests. They broke into hushed whispers the second they saw us. One of them even turned on a recorder. It was as though they had never seen a ranked player on CBN Battlenet, how immature! I walked across the hall with my sword at my hip and respectfully bowed before the old king, "Your majesty, the Royal Army has not dishonored the mission you bestowed upon us and have rooted out the Dragonling Army. Here is the head of the pirate captain, Dragonscale. Furthermore, there are another five thousand prisoners waiting outside the hall for their punishment."

One of the imperial guards walked over to me with a silver platter in hand. I placed the head on the platter for him to present to the king. King Rob threw a glance full of malice at it and said, "Theodore, Owen, you've crossed swords with the pirates, you should be able to recognize who this is, right?"

Theodore nodded, "Father, it is indeed Dragonscale's head. The Royal Army General Li Xiao Yao has eliminated the Dragonling Army!"

King Rob slapped his arm rest and stood up with a wide grin, "Good... Haha, General Li Xiao Yao is truly one of the most talented young men in the nation. Hmph, those Dragonling Pirates have terrorized the War God's River and have been like a thorn in our eye. Today, this thorn has finally been pulled out! The Royal Army has truly accomplished an incredible

mission. Simply amazing. General Li Xiao Yao, what kind of reward would you like?”

I looked down and said, “Whatever your majesty decides!”

“Alright!”

The old king roared in laughter and the system bell sounded beside my ear. As I expected, the old king was truly generous this time. Not only did he reward me, he also rewarded the entire Royal Army—

“Ding!”

System Notification: Congratulations, you have completed the SSS tier military quest [Eliminating the Dragonling Army], Your Reward: Level+1, Charm+50, Achievement Points+400, Gold+100,000. Furthermore, all Royal Army Soldiers Level+3. You have also received the following Military Equipment: Dragon Crystal Cannon x50, Cannon x100, Crossbow Carts x200, Gold x2,000,000!

.....

So many rewards! The four generals, Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Ye were also celebrating amongst themselves. Han Yuan hid a smile, “General, with all these Dragon Crystal Cannons and Gold, our Royal Army will be on a whole new level. Ha ha, this is too great. We’re definitely among the top three military armies in the empire!”

I bowed, “Thank you, your majesty for the generous reward. Your majesty, there’s still the five thousand Dragonling prisoners. How should we deal with them?”

King Rob smiled, “General Li, what do you think these detestable bandits should be dealt with?”

I pondered for a moment before speaking up, “We can break them up and assign some of them to the villages or fields to work. Or we can even assign them to guard the border. After all, we are low on manpower. Killing them would be a waste.”

King Rob grunted, “Your words ring true...”

But right at that moment, Theodore suddenly stood up and said, "Father, I must respectfully disagree with Li Xiao Yao. The Dragonling Army has so blatantly fought against the laws of the empire, making an enemy out of Father. There's no need to tolerate such dishonorable bandits. If we show mercy to these five thousand prisoners, then the next day, ten thousand, a hundred thousand rebels will be at your gates. Father, please reconsider!"

Owen bowed, "Father, brother's words are reasonable!"

I wanted to say more, but Pearl pulled me back, signaling for my silence. I knew in my heart that the Royal Army has been rising much too quickly. News of our achievements had completely overwhelmed all news about the Flame Dragon and Xia Yu Armies. That was why Theodore and Owen were so hostile towards me. Thinking back, it makes complete sense. Pearl probably didn't want me to get into this debate so I should lay low.

I took a step back to Pearl's side and didn't say anything more.

Though, who would've thought that Theodore would choose this moment to mockingly laugh at me, "All of the soldiers have gossiped about how kind of a general you are and how you never kill a prisoner. Looks like the rumors are true. General Li, I suggest that these five thousand should be hung on both sides of the street. What do you have to say about that?"

I thought back to the five thousand captives outside the city walls. They had already laid down their weapons and still had the hope to at least live their lives out behind bars. Goosebumps rose up all over my arms. I clenched my teeth and didn't say anything.

Theodore kept digging, "General Li, why are you so quiet now?"

I growled back, "If your highness believes it to be proper, then please, go ahead. There is no need to ask for permission from me."

Theodore laughed, "Father, we absolutely cannot allow these bandits and thieves to live. Execute them!"

The old king gave a frustrated sigh and said, "Theodore, I'll leave this matter to you! Is there any other business? If not, let us adjourn. I am

feeling tired.”

Louis stood not far from the throne. He crossed his arms in front of his chest, with the red handkerchief fluttering from its knot on his arm. He reported, “Your majesty, ever since the last Battle at the Sea of No Return, the Hybrid Demon Territory forces have gone into silence. Even the Revered One has lost over half of its forces. I suggest that the empire deploy its most elite troops past the Dragon City and into the Revered One’s Empire to dispose of Luo Lin’s army. At the same time, they’ll take bring his head back to honor the former duke, Luo Lei. What does your majesty think?”

The old king stiffened, “What? Advance on the Revered One’s territory? This... are you sure now is the right time?”

Louis replied, “During the Battle of the Sea of No Return, the two Demon Kings, Han Lin and Kehl, died at Deer Lake. The Hybrid Demons are very jittery right now and are in a corner. From what I see, they have very few forces left. They are now a fish in murky waters. I’m convinced that they are at the end of their path. Now is the time for decisive action. We’ll sweep the north under the imperial flag, first taking the Revered One’s territory, and then killing the rest one by one. At that point, these military achievements will resound through the pages of history!”

When Louis mentioned the achievements, I could see a light turn on in King Rob’s eyes. The old king was at the latter end of his years. As a monarch, his greatest goal was naturally to leave a good name in history. After all, he did not wish for his posterity to look back at his reign and see him as an average ruler. Louis’ words struck the heart of the matter. I could already see this failure waiting to happen. D*mn, the king is falling for his trap!

As I predicted, a few seconds later, the king gripped the hilt of his Ruler’s Sword, and his face lit up with ambition, “General Louis’ words ring true. Everyone here, let us discuss further. Who do you nominate as the commander of this exhibition?”

Theodore immediately stepped up, “I think that the Royal Army has

sufficiently demonstrated their military prowess. The commander Li Xiao Yao is, after all, a widely known hero. How about we deploy 50,000 of the Royal Army soldiers to invade the Hybrid Demon Territory's Revered One's Empire?"

King Rob nodded, "General Li, do you have any objections?"

I felt a stab in my heart. They were striking the Royal Army. I clenched my teeth and responded, "Your majesty, the Royal Army has been continuously battling for the past month and its soldiers are weary. If we were to set off for a new campaign, I would suggest your majesty to wait for my soldiers to recover first. Besides.... The Hybrid Demons in the north have more power than me, or anyone else in this room can clearly attest to. It is not as General Louis says, where they are a fish trapped in a puddle. Rather, they are highly capable and are likely to be biding their time while they hide their numbers, just waiting for us to provoke them first!"

Louis detested me for the five thousand Long Spear Unit men that I seized, as well as the death of his officer, Yugo. He coldly smiled, "General Li, are you so afraid of the Hybrid Demons that you aren't willing to set off in battle? That's the only reason I can imagine why you would shirk your responsibilities as a military man of the empire!"

I let out a sigh, "There's no need for you to try and provoke me. I will go if his majesty so commands."

Pearl clenched her fist, "Father, if General Li Xiao Yao only leads a single unit, he will undoubtedly fall to a disadvantage against the Hybrid Demons. How about... you announce a decree to deploy troops from Dragon City to go on this campaign as well! This way, there will at least be a higher chance in our victory!"

The old king nodded, "I will allow it."

Right then, Crown Prince Theodore suddenly stood up and said, "Father, even if the Royal Army and the Dragon City Armies were to both set out, they wouldn't necessarily gain total victory. I ask that you allow my Flame Dragon Army to set out with the Royal Army. The Hybrid Demon Territory

has trespassed our borders time and time again. It's about time we finally lead one sweeping campaign against them!"

The old king became giddy, "Theodore, are you certain you will return victorious?"

Theodore nodded, "Of course!"

"Good!"

The old king roared with laughter and said, "You bring honor to your title as the Crown Prince of the empire. This is the kind of air a prince should have. Prepare the decree, the Flame Dragon Army will set out with the Royal Army. They both will work together and support each other in regards to the rations and techniques!"

Theodore looked down with a smile, "Thank you, Father!"

I bowed as well and replied, "Thank you, your majesty."

Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and the others followed closely behind me. Each of them was more excited than the last. This new mission was a great chance to earn achievement points. Xiao Lie didn't have to worry. Based on what happened at the Sea of No Return, it's clear that the Demon Kings weren't normal BOSSes. They all were extremely cunning. The Flame Dragon Army along with the Royal Army amounted to less than 200,000 forces. With that many soldiers, they all might even end up being buried in Hybrid Demon Territory. But... if Dragon City's Frost and Zi Shu along with their fifteen Dragon Knights were to lead the charge, we might have a chance at victory. Either way, whether we live or die, all we can do now is try our best!

When I reached this conclusion, I turned around to leave. I glared at Louis. After all, it was his bright idea to push the Royal Army towards its own demise.

Louis was stunned by this show of defiance. He clearly seemed to have never imagined that I would dare to give him a look like that. He saw my killing intent with that one glance. The moment I get the chance, I will take out this effeminate General of the Violent Thunder Army without

hesitation!

King Rob stood up and pointed his Ruler's Sword above his head with a smile, "Then, two days from now, the campaign will set out!"

Chapter 815: Broken Promises

As soon as King Rob announced his orders, the system released a game-wide announcement. This expedition was now an event that players could participate in. Not to mention the fact that players could earn achievement points and rewards from the event—

“Ding!”

System Notification: Players, please note, the SSS Tier Main Military Quest [Tian Ling City Expedition] has now been announced. Tomorrow at 12 o'clock, noon, the Tian Ling City armies—the Flame Dragon Army and the Royal Army will set out for the Revered One's Territory by passing through Dragon City. Any player can participate to earn rewards and achievement points. The top three players will have the chance to obtain a Deity and Country Tier reward. Additionally, if the expedition is successful, all players will receive two times the amount of the original rewards!

.....

As I walked out of the palace, I opened up the [Zhan Long] core officer chat and said, “There's an event tomorrow that all of [Zhan Long] will participate in. I am going after Luo Lin!”

Dancing Forest: “Well, well, is the battle for revenge finally here?”

Qing Qian smiled and said: “That's right, that's right, it's a battle of revenge!”

Wan Er stared into my face for a long moment before saying, “Pig, why are the NPC armies releasing your Royal Army and the Flame Dragon Army? You must've offended someone high up in the empire...”

I chuckled, “Something like that... That's why I'm having my doubts about this expedition. So, I hope that all of [Zhan Long]'s players will attend. Otherwise, if we leave it solely to the Royal Army, I'm afraid that Crown Prince Theodore won't provide very much support...”

Li Mu grinned, “Don't worry, I expect most of our core players will

participate regardless. Even if every last one of us were to lose a level, we won't allow the Royal Army to be decimated!"

"Alright, let's get to preparations. We'll set out tomorrow at noon!"

"OK!"

.....

I sent a few messages to Wan Er, urging her to go to bed early. It was already very late in the night. She retorted back, saying I needed to sleep as well. While I had agreed, I knew that it would take at least an hour for me to finish all of my preparations before I could go to bed. There were just too many tasks I needed to complete with the Royal Army first. Who knows when I'd be able to log off.

Outside the city were countless wooden pillars erected in the dirt. All the Dragonling prisoners were hung at the stake. They struggled futilely before slowly releasing their last breath of air.

I walked out into the town with Xia Ye, Long Xing, and the other generals behind me. One of the Dragonling lieutenants recognized me. As he grabbed and scratched at the rope around his neck, he cursed at me, "Li Xiao Yao, you said before that if we surrendered, you would spare us. Why? Why... why are you killing us now? Just what have we done wrong? Did we put our faith in the wrong man? Li Xiao Yao, you've gone back on your word. I curse you. Just you wait! You will live the rest of your life in misery!"

"Shut up!" Long Xing spun around and glared into the lieutenant's eyes, "Did you think that our commander didn't fight for you guys? Contrary to what you might think, he does not make the decisions in this city. Besides, have you Dragonling soldiers not killed your fair share of villagers? Do you not think you deserve this punishment? Go peacefully, and stop your wretched whining from dirtying our ears!"

The lieutenant's eyes burned and he cursed, "You're going back on your word. You deserve a punishment worse than death."

Long Xing turned around without another word. He walked over to his

horse and pulled out a bow. "Shua!" The arrow shot through the air, piercing the lieutenant's throat straight through. Blood gurgled up his throat. He couldn't even make a sound.

One of the executioners was furious, "What right do you have to kill a death row prisoner? You... how can a deputy general be so lawless?"

Long Xing coldly replied, "What are you going to do, kill me?"

The executioner glared at him and then turned away, mumbling under his breath, "These unreasonable soldiers. They should just go and get cut into pieces by the Hybrid Demons!"

Han Yuan raised his blade and said, "What did you say?"

The executioner flinched.

I lowered my voice and gave a curt order, "Han Yuan, don't say anything anymore. We're going back to the fort!"

I reigned in my Flying Scythe Horse and walked away in silence. Xia Ye followed up behind me and angrily vented, "General, I know you feel bad. But... but, there's no need for us to regret any of our actions. Everything our Royal Army has done has been watched and judged by the heavens. A hundred years from now, our posterity will make their judgments. Don't think too much about the prisoner's words."

I nodded in response, but I could still feel the frustration in my heart. However, I did feel some comfort. Long Xing, Xia Ye, Xiao Lie, and Han Yuan have finally become a powerful fist altogether. This kind of Royal Army will eventually develop into a fearsome force, one strong enough to awe all of Tian Ling City, and maybe even the continent!

.....

After I returned to the Royal Army garrison, I went straight to the Central Tent. Long Xing proceeded to ask, "Commander, the 81 ships that we recovered from the Dragonling Empire and the four we originally had total up to 85 ships. They're all docked beside the Royal Army shipyard. But our expedition to the Hybrid Demon Territory is over land. There's no way we can bring them along. What should we do with them?"

I thought about it for a long time, “Leave a thousand men behind to guard our campgrounds and then another thousand for the docks. The rest of the men will set out in this expedition, I think it will be much more terrifying than we imagine.”

Han Yuan said, “General, what makes you say that?”

I wryly smiled, “When we were at the Sea of No Return and Deer Lake, we killed quite a few of the Hybrid Demons and we even dealt with two of the Hybrid Demon Kings. But... Han Lin is the Sea Demon King and was already an outcast from their army. On the other hand, Blood Giant Kehl is the King of Giants, a musclehead without any brains. In other words, those two were the weakest Kings of them all. Luo Lin, who’s ranked 15th, has both brains and power. Then there’s Ignaus, Lanais, and Xi Fu, whose powers we can’t even imagine. Their armies are well maintained and undamaged. It’s already arrogant for Tian Ling City to try and take them on over land. Based on the intellect of Lanais, Xi Fu, and Luo Lin, they must have already thought that we would take the initiative to invade their territory. We have very few ships, so it’s very unlikely for us to go out to fight over the Sea of No Return. The only other path we’ll take is over Dragon City, and the only other route to take is through the Revered One’s Territory. If I were one the Demon Kings, I would deploy my troops to the borders and ambush the oncoming Tian Ling City troops. In other words, both sides will have readied tens of thousands of men and soldiers. We might as well be going to die!”

“This....”

Han Ling took a deep breath and his face became pale, “If that is the case, then why doesn’t General make that clear with his majesty? Why must our army take this risk?”

I let out a bitter laugh, “Your majesty’s heart was set. Why would he listen to the words of a small General of the South? Besides, Louis’ words had already created a false image of victory for his majesty. That is something that his majesty has dreamt of for decades. We can no longer sway his decision.”

Long Xing pounded his fist into the sand table and said, “D*mned Louis, that b*st*rd should be cut down by a thousand blades! My lord, after this battle, we should take the first chance to kill Louis off!”

I smiled back, “Let’s wait and see. He is a commander after all. Killing a general of the empire isn’t a small matter. Besides, Louis is incredibly good at kissing *ss. He deeply understands everything his majesty likes. We, on the other hand, are just military men. There’s no need for us to think so much about this. Let’s just win this battle first! That’s right, have the hundred cannons and the fifty Dragon Crystal Cannons arrived yet?”

“We still have to wait for a while before then.” Xia Ye replied.

I turned around and said, “General Xia Ye, send two thousand of your soldiers and have them escort the new military equipment. Afterwards, bring all the large-scale weapons in the Royal Army to Dragon City. When we set out for battle, those will be in the front. If we can’t match the Hybrid Demons in terms of power, then we’ll at least make the most out of these heavy cannons. Also, we won’t be resting for the next two days. Tighten up the training sessions. This way, less people will die in the upcoming battle.

Xia Ye nodded with a smile, “Roger!”

.....

I roamed the Royal Army grounds for a long time before going to Dragon’s Den. As before, Dragon’s Den was recruiting Cliff Dragon Knights. I tried deploying them out, but I ended up receiving a notification that they were only permitted to go 2,000 yards outside the territory. Any further and I would lose control over them. This was also a type of fairness control. Otherwise, if I could bring along NPCs like the Cliff Dragon Knights who had 120% of my stats to other battles, the players and guilds would probably cry their hearts out.

I continued all the way until three in the morning. When I logged off, I knew I needed to get a good rest. Once we reach the expedition, it was probably going to be at least 25 straight hours of battle.

After I took off the helmet, I ate a quick snack and went straight to bed.

A lot of different people appeared in my dreams. They seemed to be players from the game. I saw flashes of Louis' arrogant grin. The scenery immediately shifted, showing me Long Xing and Han Yuan's bloody corpses on the ground. I screamed and ran over to them, only to see Theodore, Owen, Pearl and King Rob all lying in a pool of blood. It was as though my dream was a mirror of my greatest fears. When my eyes finally opened, it was eleven in the morning. Everything was a dream. There was still time for me to change the ending.

.....

I took a quick shower and by the time I walked out, I saw that Dong Cheng and Wan Er were already waiting for me. Tang Qi and Dong Cheng Lei were also there. Dong Cheng Lei had even brought a bunch of snacks for Dong Cheng and Wan Er. That b*st*rd spoils his little sister too much. She sweetly gave her brother a shoulder massage and said, "Brother, I want the pink Chanel bag, the newest style. Could you help me buy one from your friend?"

Dong Cheng Lei didn't even ask how much it was and smiled, "Alright, I'll ask when I go home this afternoon. Afterwards, I'll have it be shipped here."

"Thank you!"

Dong Cheng hugged her brother with a grin, "Brother is the best!"

I sat down at the dining table and said, "There's only half an hour before the event begins, what should we eat?"

Wan Er smiled, "We've already ordered take out. The delivery should be here soon!"

"Alright~"

A few minutes later, a Vespa drove up our driveway and a young delivery man walked up to our front door with breakfast. It wasn't a feast, but everyone gathered around the table and we happily talked as we ate. After the quick breakfast, we all logged on. This expedition for other players was just a chance to gain some rewards, but for me, it was a life and death

battle for the Royal Army!

Chapter 816: Initial Defeat

“Shua!”

After I logged on, I appeared in the Central Tent of the Royal Army Garrison. I could hear the clamoring of soldiers running around and horses stomping across the grounds. When I walked out of the tent, I could see that quite a few of the tents had already been taken down. In the distance, Han Yuan pointed his spear, sending a unit of Spear Soldiers out. Han Yuan on the other hand seemed to be changing his weapon all the time. There was no helping it though. The ironsmiths of the empire were actually all pretty average. Not to mention the fact that the iron ore that they mined were filled with impurities that hadn't been refined. The NPC weapon quality was far lower than it was for the players. As such, their blades broke very easily. A warrior like Han Yuan could fight with anything—he was a master in all types of weapons and blades after all.

“General, you're here!”

Han Yuan walked over and reported, “Most of our troops have already arrived at Tian Ling City. There's a large stage set up there for the Flame Dragon Army and the Royal Army to address the troops...”

I pursed my lips, “Alright then, let's set out now before we miss the ceremonies.”

“Yes sir!”

.....

A unit of horsemen all mounted their horses and followed me towards Tian Ling City. In the distance, I could see a golden stage appear above the horizon, just outside of the city. King Rob, Theodore, and Owen had all arrived. By the time Han Yuan, Long Xing, I and the other generals arrived, a herald shouted, “The Commander of the Royal Army, the General of the South, General Li has arrived!”

King Rob stood up, “Now that everyone is here, let us begin!”

A group of soldiers placed a ram's head on the stage altar. King Rob then

went on to give a lofty speech, something along the lines of, “Live and die for the empire, rise up against the evil against us,” to boost soldier morale. Of course, words like that meant nothing for players like me. Han Yuan, Long Xing, and others however seemed to be highly affected and they all got excited. Looks like this ceremony does have a degree of influence.

Crown prince Theodore stood up and also said a few words.

When second prince Owen walked over, he handed a Tiger Talisman* and the Marshal Sword to the crown prince Theodore with a smile, “Brother, during this expedition, you are the marshal. The Flame Dragon Army, the Royal Army, and the Dragon City Army will all be under your command. Unfortunately, I was not called to arms and can only wait back in the city for your victorious return!”

*TL Note: The Tiger Talisman is traditionally used as a symbol of military authority, placing command of an army in the hands of whoever possesses this talisman.

Theodore smiled back and carefully tucked the talisman away in a pouch at his hip. With one hand on the Marshal Sword, he patted Owen’s shoulder with a smile, “Brother, thank you for your thoughts. I will return victorious, along with Luo Lin’s head! I leave all the matters of Tian Ling City with you. Take care to not sacrifice your health for work. I still need you by my side to help handle state matters!”

Owen nodded, “Yes brother!”

While the exchange made the brothers look very close, I already took a few hints from that one conversation. It was clear that Theodore was expecting victory during this expedition. That would be the only reason why he’d stake his Flame Dragon Army in this and set out with us. In other words, as long as the Flame Dragon Army returns victorious after this expedition, then his place as the heir to the throne will be solidified. At that point, the old officials of the court would provide more support to Theodore, and Owen would have no choice but to swallow his pride and remain a subordinate to his brother.

Owen’s thought process was even simpler. All he wanted was a defeat

from this expedition. That way, Theodore would get less support. The old king might even decide to change his mind about which prince to make the heir. When the time comes, Owen would be the natural choice.

After thinking about this dynamic, I started to grow annoyed. There was no need for me to waste brain cells on this. Right now, my priority should be leading the Royal Army to victory. As for who becomes the emperor, it matters very little to me.

.....

Theodore gripped the Marshal Sword and pointed the blade at the sky as he shouted, "Expeditionary force, set out! For the honor of our empire, and for the dignity of our people, let us protect our home!"

This was all fluff of course. Most of the soldiers were here to fight to protect their families and homes.

The three troops set off in a magnificent display. Around 51,000 Royal Army troops were participating in the battle. The Flame Dragon Troops, even as reinforcements, had 150,000 men following close behind. There was a total of 200,000 men in this expedition, including the ten thousand that Dragon City was providing. In terms of NPCs, we had close to 220,000 men, not to mention the fact that there were several million players participating in this event. It was enough to force Luo Lin to make a run for his money. In the battle of the Sea of No Return, Luo Lin had only used a fraction of his forces and his war boats, we didn't even see a shadow of him there. This time, we'll force him out of his nest. He won't have any choice but to appear!

We marched all the way to Dragon City. Outside, thirty thousand [Zhan Long] players were already prepared to take the mission. Wan Er stood at the front, leading the troops. Under her orders, all the players joined our troops and marched north. Allowing the supply wagons to travel in front of us, Frost had already constructed a slope for the wagons to travel on that cut straight through to the Northern Territories. Numerous Dragon Crystal Cannons, Cannons, and Crossbow Carts were lined up and waiting to be taken ahead. I continued leading the Royal Army. To be

honest, it would be the same even if I wasn't there. The four generals were ultimately far more capable enough to lead this journey.

.....

Our men marched in high spirits, even when the temperature dropped around to twenty degrees. The higher up the mountain, the colder it became. Soon, even flakes of snow even started falling from the sky. Thankfully, everyone was well prepared. All of the men in the Royal Army were wearing light armor underneath a layer of leather, chainmail, and cotton padding. It was specially designed to allow for movement, while also keeping them warm at the same time. On the other hand, the battle horses seemed to be most affected by the climate. The player horses were fine since they didn't have any abnormal bodily conditions!

"Careful, it's the Demon Hunters!"

I looked into the distance and grunted, "Shift the formation so that the Blade Shield soldiers are on the outside. Advance carefully!"

Several units of the Barbarian Blade Shield soldiers all shifted to the border and raised their shields. Soon after, a spear pierced through the snowy landscape, plunging into one of the shields. "Keng, keng!" a rain of spears followed soon after. Thankfully, they didn't deal much damage. On the other hand, the Royal Army archers let loose a volley of arrows, shooting down all the Demon Hunters.

The current landscape was far different from the past. The first time we came here, we took heavy losses at the hands of these Demon Hunters. This time however, just the Royal Army archers were enough to stop these Demon Hunters in their tracks.

Looking behind us, I saw that the Flame Dragon Army was incredibly well organized despite the little skirmish. No wonder they were the number one army in the empire. [Legend], [Judgement], and [House of Prestige] players surrounded the Flame Dragon Army as protection. Quite a few of them were actually officers in their military ranks. Fang Ge Que was one of the supervisors in the Flame Dragon Army after all. With his fan in hand, he calmly walked among the group of people. I could see his

supervisor badge hanging at his hip. He was in the middle of a discussion with Enchanted Painting. Enchanted Painting rode on a white battle horse and carried her Water God's Halberd in hand. Light reflected off of the blade, giving [Legend]'s number one knight a true heroic poise.

On the other side, I saw that there were quite a few [Flying Dragon] players in the mix. I could see Drunken Spear with his spear in hand quietly walking beside Soaring Dragon. Ye Lai taunted, "Well well, what's the commander of the Xia Yu Army Harvest Troop doing at this event? Isn't the Xia Yu Army not fighting the Hybrid Demons? Why don't you just go back and continue planting in your garden!"

Drunken Spear scoffed and replied, "Can't I take this chance to gain some achievement points? You *ss, if you say anymore, I'll make a drill a clean hole straight through your chest..."

Ye Lai waved his hand, "I have around fourth thousand [Judgement] elites behind me, you dare to do so? Haha, besides, I am a lieutenant in the Flame Dragon Army cavalry, you can't do anything to me..."

Drunken Spear face-palmed, "Would it kill you to have a little humor?"

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Everyone was in high spirits. Looks like I was the only one who didn't seem optimistic about the battle ahead of us among the players. But in retrospect, I was no different from them. Even if the sky were to fall, I'd still have friends like Li Mu and Old K to help me hold it up. There was nothing for me to be afraid of. Since I was now the commander of the Royal Army, it was my job to shoulder that responsibility. I couldn't live carefree any longer.

Not long after, our armies arrived before some plantations. I had been here once before. It was the map that bordered the Graveyard of Heroes.

"Careful, there are signs of the enemy!"

A scout shouted back to us from a distance. It seemed that he had gone too far ahead and couldn't make it back in time. A sharp arrow suddenly pierced through his throat. Blood spurted forward and he fell off his horse.

In the distance, a mass of monsters suddenly appeared on the horizon. They were Demon Flame Archers, Level 154 Hybrid Demons Category 5. They had terrifying attack power and exceedingly high accuracy!

TL Note: Due to the confusing nature of the levels, I'm switching Level 5 Hybrid Demons to Category 5. Sorry for any confusion!

On the outer edge of [Zhan Long]'s troops, Matcha immediately raised her Lion King Shield and shouted, "Shields!"

The knights around her all raised their shields in front of their chests. Soon after, the Blade Shield Soldiers from the Royal Army also raised their heavy shields. A dark cloud suddenly covered the sun. It soon became clear that it was a rain of arrows. The Demon Flame Archers took their advantage in altitude and led the first attack!

I could hear arrows constantly bouncing off of the shields. Players and NPCs that didn't have shields to hide behind had no choice but to directly take the hits. In the blink of an eye, several hundred people died. The Flame Dragon Army also raised their shields to block the attack, but they similarly lost quite a few soldiers. This was the first attack from the Hybrid Demons and we were already at a disadvantage. Theodore raised his Marshal sword, fury coloring his face. He roared, "Flame Dragon cavalymen, charge! Cut down those d*mn*d Hybrid Demons!"

In the next moment, one of the Flame Dragon majors waved his sword and led several units of cavalymen in a charge.

I carefully observed the situation before giving the Royal Army my orders.

In the distance, I could see that Flame Dragon Army was close to their target. The Demon Flame Archers suddenly separated and revealed a group of Beastmen carrying long spears. It was the Beast Blood Spearmen, who were Category 4 Hybrid Demons*. I felt my heart stop at my throat. F*ck, the Hybrid Demons have long been prepared to battle Tian Ling City. This was not a good omen!

TL Note: Due to the confusing nature of the levels, I'm switching Level 5 Hybrid Demons to Category 5. Sorry for any confusion!

Soon, both sides clashed. The Flame Dragon knights rushed right into the Spearmen, clashing against their blades. Screams and howls rose up above the sounds of fighting. While the Flame Dragon Cavalry had killed quite a few Beast Blood Spearmen, both sides were fighting on equal footing. In the blink of an eye, corpses covered the field. After several minutes, ten thousand Flame Dragon cavalymen broke through eleven layers of monsters before finally losing their momentum. They were left with no choice but to face death. The knights that didn't manage to scatter in time ended up dying under a volley of arrows. A ten thousand man cavalry, and not a single survivor!

The Hybrid Demons' strategy was incredibly simple. While the Demon Flame Archers retreated, they continued shooting their arrows and the Beast Blood Spearmen wedged themselves between the Flame Dragon Army and the archers, stopping their advance. A bloody scent wafted over in the wind. There were some Flame Dragon horsemen that hadn't died and were still struggling to pull the spears out of their bodies.

All of the players were silenced by the scene before them. The commander of the Flame Dragon Army, the marshal of this expedition, Crown Prince Theodore didn't speak a word, the expression on his face turned incredibly ugly.

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Han Yuan raised his blade and shouted, "Such... such terrifying Hybrid Demons! Commander, what do we do? Should I lead our Steel Cavalry in a charge?"

I calmly replied, "Why, do you want to die?"

"Then what do we do?" Long Xing asked.

I grinned, "That's simple, we'll have the Dragon Crystal Cannons and the Cannons fight this war. Seeing that these Hybrid Demons have decided to use this kind of strategy, there's no need for us to wait for them to attack first, we'll just blast them to pieces!"

Chapter 817: Delusional Love

The Flame Dragon Army's Dragon Crystal Cannons were still being escorted from Tian Ling City to Dragon City. I, on the other hand, had our cannons delivered to Dragon City first. As such, our heavy machinery got a head start. Furthermore, King Rob had granted 50 Dragon Crystal Cannons to the Royal Army. Those, in addition to the ones that the Violent Thunder Army originally had, the Royal Army was kind of like a rich man with a whopping hundred cannons under his wing. Counting just the regular cannons, we had at least two hundred, along with countless crossbow carts. Under my command, the battle carts carrying the Dragon Crystal Cannons came to a stop. We turned them towards the enemy. Long Xing pulled out his sword and roared, "Release!"

My eardrums rang as over a hundred Dragon Crystal Cannons fired at once. This in turn created an extremely powerful surge of power in the area, pushing all the NPCs and players backward. I could see the muzzle flashes as they exploded in the distance. All the Blood Beast Men and Demon Flame Archers were blasted into pieces. Over 30,000 of their soldiers had come out. With this sweeping attack, over half of them were killed. Limbs and spare body parts littered the ground and smoke slowly filled the sky. The startled Hybrid Demons had no choice but to retreat.

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Right then, one of the majors in the Flame Dragon Army walked his horse over and shouted, "Royal Army men, have you gone crazy? Our brothers are still on the battlefield! Why would you release your cannons?"

I calmly looked at him in the eye and said, "Do you see any Flame Dragon soldiers that are alive? I didn't."

"You!"

He glared back at me, but couldn't retort anything back. After all, my ranking was far above his. Not to mention that I was the commander of the Royal Army. If Theodore didn't open his mouth, what could he do? It was clear as day that Theodore was already in a bad mood. It was only the

first battle and he was already losing the advantage. He initially joined this campaign thinking that with Flame Dragon Army he would be able to defeat these Hybrid Demon Armies, but never would he have imagined that he would be taught a lesson by the Royal Army. Sometimes strength does not determine the outcome. A battle is truly a competition of strategy and wits. In regards to this, Theodore is no match for me, a player.

After that round of explosions from the Royal Army, the [Legend], [Hero's Mound], and [Judgement] players were all gaping. None of them would've imagined that the NPC cannons could be so strong. Li Mu walked over to me with his Neptune's Blade in hand and said, "These Dragon Crystal Cannons are so OP.... I can't believe it. They didn't seem that strong at the Battle of the Sea of No Return..."

I replied, "At the Sea of No Return the Dragon Crystal Cannons had been dampened by the sea mist, and so their attack power was weakened. Now that we're fighting on the plains, it is only natural that they be more powerful."

Long Xing reminded me, "General, after our Dragon Crystal Cannons released five consecutive explosions, they've turned red hot from the heat. We won't be able to reuse them for a short while or else they'll explode. Please be careful."

I nodded, "Okay, understood. Let's set out! There's no need to bother with those Beast Blood Spearmen, if they dare come close, we'll just attack. There's no need for us to delay our journey any longer."

"Yes sir!"

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The Flame Dragon Army had already set out in front of us. [Legend], [Judgement], and [House of Prestige] also went out with them. There were far more players than NPC soldiers, but they were far less organized and disciplined in comparison. Even the [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen couldn't match the organized Royal Army formations.

As we passed the border of the Hero's Graveyard, we continued onward into the Revered One's Plains. I could see the lone fortress in the distance.

It was the Revered One's City, Luo Lin's nest. The city itself was shrouded in mist. There was still quite a distance between us and our destination. Who knows what else would be awaiting us.

I dashed forward a dozen or so meters, right over to a group of Dragon City soldiers. When they saw me, they immediately greeted me, "Lord Dragon Knight!"

Among the crowd of people, Queen Zi Shu was riding on a red battle horse. When she saw me arrive, she smiled, "Master, you're here!"

I gave a nod and looked over at Frost. She was riding on a battle horse with a white mane. She was dressed in intricate armor and she wielded her Severing Beauty Sword in her hand. Her long hair was up in a tight and simple bun and she wasn't wearing any jewelry. Even so, her eyes shone bright on her pretty face. She was looking at the distant city as she gave a sigh, "So we've finally reached this point...."

I replied, "Frost, Luo Lin was the first to betray mankind. He must've known that there would be a day like this. I pray you would forget your old affections and not leave any mercy for him."

Frost wryly smiled, "Don't worry Xiao Yao, I remember my mission. I also remember how you had nearly sacrificed your life for me in the Stormy Abyss. I'm only feeling a little sentimental. Even so, I understand that there's no way for us to return to the past. I won't look back. I will personally end this nightmare!"

I nodded, "Okay."

Queen Zi Shu lightheartedly nudged Frost, "No need to be so serious, you're making even me nervous...."

Qing Luo rode in on a white battle horse and smiled, "Lord Dragon Rider, now that you're the commander of the Royal Army, you've got a different aura floating around you. Your charisma is quite mesmerizing now!"

I lazily looked at her and smiled, "Qing Luo, haven't you reached the age where it's time to consider marriage?"

Qing Luo immediately blushed, “I.... I’ve never thought about those things. Powerful enemies are always waiting for a moment of weakness. All I want to do right now is follow Lady Frost and exterminate the Hybrid Demons before I think about those worldly things....”

I gave a long sigh, “The Hybrid Demon is both powerful and large. By the time you exterminate them all, it may be a hundred years later. At that point, little Qing Luo will become Grandma Qing Luo, and I’m afraid you won’t be eligible then...”

Frost couldn’t help but grin on the side, “Don’t scare her. Qing Luo still has some delusions about love.”

Zi Shu smiled, “Frost, are you saying that you don’t have any fantasies about love?”

Frost was startled, and a sliver of annoyance flashed in her eyes, “Me? What does it matter if I do or don’t? My position has sealed the fate of my love life. Besides... I have the body of a god, which grants me the curse of immortality. Even if I did have such delusions, would I just watch my partner wither away with age? I’d rather not. Someone like me should just avoid bringing that kind of pain to others...”

Zi Shu patted her chest with a smile, “Love is like a firework in the night sky, it lasts for an eternity in the moment. There doesn’t exist a love that lasts through space and time. Therefore, if there is love, then you shouldn’t miss it. Otherwise, you may never understand love in your lifetime.”

Frost couldn’t help but grin, “Zi Shu, you seem to be very experienced in this matter, did you love Ignaus?”

Zi Shu stiffened and turned her face away, “He and I were only civil, only for the sake of reproduction. He never loved me. I understand that very well. Besides, I would never love him either. Rather, I do love my little handsome master...”

I nearly spat out blood when I heard that final sentence. I immediately backed away and said, “I have to go and lead the Royal Army, you guys have fun. Frost, when the battle begins later, let the Flame Dragon Army

take the lead. There's no need for us to stop them from running to their own deaths. There are already so few reinforcement Dragon City soldiers, and their main objective is to defend Dragon City. There's no need for them to die a meaningless death for another man's campaign."

Frost nodded, "Understood. You be careful."

"I will."

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Continuing forward, a group of dog-like beasts appeared on the plains. All of them had rotting bodies with long and sharp sabers dripping with drool. They cackled and growled as they looked at the legion of men. I didn't see any fear in their eyes. Though, thinking back, these Category 3 Hybrid Demons were spirits of the dead anyway—why would they be afraid of death?

Long Xing raised his long spear and said, "They're Hellhounds. I've seen pictures of these dogs in our history books. They're incredibly fierce and have the strength to tear a man apart alive. But... why would there be so many of them in the Revered One's plains?!"

I looked in the distance but I only saw waves of dust rolling across the plains. Countless Hellhounds were heading straight for us. Clearly the Hybrid Demons had long received news of our arrival and were well prepared. These Hellhounds must've all been brought over from the Ghostly Rope Bridge. As I had predicted, the Hybrid Demon Kings were planning on using these plains as a battlefield. They must've figured that this would be a good place to bury 200,000 troops.

"Prepare for battle!"

I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword well above my head and shouted, "Blade and Shield Camp in front, defend against the attack from the Hellhounds! We cannot let them through!"

My battle doctrine was to deal the most damage to the enemy at the cost of losing the least amount of lives. With the Blade and Shield Camp's heavy shields for defense, the Hellhounds wouldn't be able to kill quite as

many of our people. On the flip side, if these Category 3 Hybrid Demons couldn't break through our defenses, then they would just be giving experience and equipment to the Royal Army and [Zhan Long] soldiers.

"Steel Blade Horsemen, defense formation!" Wan Er's clear voice rang out. Her voice was very pleasant to the ears, but it was powerful and firm. Perhaps, Wan Er's orders carried even more weight than Li Mu or Qing Qian's.

[Zhan Long] and the Royal Army defenses were very close and well-knit. On the other hand, the numerous guilds from Tian Ling City also set up their battle formations, creating a stretch that was a dozen or so kilometers long. With a slight shift in view, I could see the amazing scene. Hundreds of thousands of Hellhounds were rushing at the mass of players and NPCs. Everyone pulled out their blades and faced forward, anticipating the attack. I could even feel my breath quicken with excitement.

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I pulled out my own Zhen Yue Blade as well. The moment the Hellhounds got close I immediately threw a chain of attacks. With a few slashes, I cut off one of the Hellhounds' heads. My damage was just superb. On my left, I saw that the [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen were all pushed back upon impact. On my right, the Royal Army Barbarians roared and held their ground against the attack of the Hellhounds. At the same time, all of the shields shifted and blades burst out in quick succession. In a flash, the blades disappeared back behind the shields, blocking any counter-attack from the Hellhounds. The entire process would repeat again and again. This kind of strategy was extremely useful in a situation like this.

In the group of [Zhan Long] players, hundreds of arrows and spells flew into the group of monsters. At a time like this, the players were the true damage dealers. The system took this into account as well. After all, it would be boring to make the players only gain experience from clearing maps. What helped maintain player attention was the game system's constant refreshing of quests and events.

Chapter 818: Smart Ai Gravedigger

Demons

“Grrr...”

The Hellhounds were essentially crazed dogs, attacking everything in their path. The second wave of Hellhounds immediately ripped the players in the frontline. Some of the smaller guilds were not able to hold against the attack, and they fell one after another. I could hear their wails and screams, but the Hellhounds showed no mercy. Not long after, all guilds ranked under a hundred had fallen. If they couldn't even stand their ground against these Category 3 Hybrid Demons, then it was useless for them to continue forward anyway.

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My Zhen Yue Blade raged against the monsters, releasing bursts of energy and combos. Who knows how many Hellhound corpses were under my horse's hooves. The corpses piled up before the [Zhan Long] frontline. After all, our Steel Blade Horsemen had superior health and defense stats. The Hellhounds couldn't break through no matter how fiercely they tried. All they could do was get killed by the ranged attacks. The Royal Army was in the same situation. After an hour of fighting, [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army didn't lose a single member. It was practically a miracle.

Not long after, the number of Hellhounds began to decrease, and their survivors were sparse. Thankfully the corpses of the monsters disappeared quickly, or else the piles would build up so high that they'd hinder our line of sight. Piled at the top were mounds of gold and equipment. A Category 3 Hybrid Demon wouldn't drop any high tier equipment. Even so, there was a lot, and the feeling of picking loot off the ground was quite satisfying.

In the distance, Prince Theodore raised his Marshall's Sword and looked into the horizon, “Advance!”

The Flame Dragon Army began to push forward. I felt my heart sink.

The Hybrid Demon Army wouldn't solely rely on this group of Hellhounds to block our advance. There had to be some type of other force. Wasn't the Flame Dragon Army being too careless with its advance?

The Flame Dragon Army's knights rushed across the plains, raising clouds of dust. I heard a loud rumbling sound coming from within the dust clouds. Following that, the soldiers began to scream and yell.

"What happened?!" I raised my Dragon Reservoir Sword and dashed forward to get a closer look.

Han Yuan held his blade in hand and reported back, "General, it's a trap! The Flame Dragon Army's frontline knights were ambushed!"

"As I predicted..."

I fell silent. I felt no satisfaction in being right. The Flame Dragon Army was fighting alongside the Royal Army in this battle. If they took heavy losses, that would mean that the Royal Army would have to fight the rest alone.

The fog slowly dissipated, revealing an enormous ditch. Heaven knows when the Hybrid Demons dug out this trap. It was a dozen meters wide and stretched across the entire plain. When I led my Royal Army Cavalry to the scene, I could see long and sharp spikes emerging from the ditch. The Flame Dragon horsemen screamed as they fell onto the spikes. This trap had taken the lives of at least a thousand Flame Dragon horsemen.

"Grrrr...."

As the border of the trap began to shudder, a familiar hand and blade emerged from the dirt. A fierce head soon followed behind it. It was a Gravedigger Demon. The originally Category 2 Hybrid Demons had now advanced to Category 5 and their attack power had increased along with their rankings. One after another, more and more of the monsters crawled out of the ditch like enormous ants.

I quickly retreated and shouted, "Get into formations, prepare to defend!"

The ditch was at least a dozen meters deep, obstructing the players and

the NPC troops in the southern plains. Looks like we won't be able to pass without killing these Gravediggers first. Furthermore, their appearance was enough to show how the Hybrid Demons were able to create such an enormous trap in the first place.

The Gravedigger Demons attack power was far greater than that of the Hellhounds. With two sharp blades, they definitely outmatched the claws of the Hellhounds.

“Retreat!”

A group of Barbarian Blade and Shield soldiers ran back in a frenzy. Even so, the Gravedigger Demons immediately caught up with them. Three of the demons rushed at one of the barbarians and immediately delivered a flurry of attacks. That Barbarian acted pretty fast and managed to turn around and block the attack with his shield. “Keng, keng, keng!” he parried the blades. Unfortunately, the Gravedigger Demons were even faster. One of them dipped forward and swept out his blade. “Ka Cha!” The blade sunk into the warrior's right leg, while the other two continued their onslaught. Within moments, the Barbarian finally gave in and was killed. The scene roused anger and fury among the Royal Army soldiers.

“Formation, Defend!”

Long Xing roared his orders over the chaos and clamor. At the same time, he threw his spear forward. “Pu Chi!” It pierced straight through one of the Gravedigger Demons. With a push, he threw the demon into the air. Several Cavalrymen Archers fired away, killing the demon in the air.

Concurrently, the rest of the Gravedigger Demons had caught up. Who knows how many more demons would crawl out from the ground. They flooded our defenses without any signs of stopping. Sparks flew off the shields of the Barbarian Soldiers. Some of them couldn't hold against the pressure and were forced to retreat. Very quickly, the lines were being pushed apart by the Gravedigger Demons. [Zhan Long] was in a similar situation, and as a result, the lines began to shift and loosen. The attack power of these Gravediggers was no joke, they were too strong!

Not far from us, a mid-sized guild of around four thousand players had

completely lost their formation and fell apart. [Zhan Long] couldn't help them. After all, we needed to watch own formation. It was already hard enough to just protect ourselves.

After we retreated several hundred meters, the myriad of Gravedigger Demons charged at us. I glanced behind us and shouted, "Bring out the crossbow carts and prepare for release!"

"Yes sir!"

Not long after, numerous crossbow carts were equipped with arrows. Han Yuan raised his long blade and roared, "Blade and Shield Camp, Testudo Formation!"

Right then, the first row of Barbarians knelt to the ground with their shields covering their bodies. The center and back rows of Barbarians all knelt and raised their shields over their heads. The entire unit was at about the height of half a man and couldn't attack. On the flip side, this was the most flawless defense formation. With the front row kneeling, this gave the crossbow carts a line of sight. Han Yuan roared, "Release!"

"Keng, keng, keng!" The mechanisms shifted, releasing a flurry of powerful arrows that pierced through the Gravedigger Demons. Sometimes the long arrows would skewer multiple demons together like a kabob. Seeing them flail around the spear was actually quite hilarious. The crossbow carts continued shooting into the crowd of monsters, killing them in droves.

I quickly ordered, "That's enough, stop the crossbow carts and refill the arrows. Blade and Shield, rise for battle!"

The Barbarians had long been holding in a belly of anger. They all immediately stood up and began swinging their blades at the Gravedigger Demons. Even when they fell, the Barbarians would swoop over their corpses, dismantling their heads and limbs before they would feel satisfied. There was no helping it—many of the Royal Army brethren had fallen to the hands of these Gravedigger Demons. This kind of hatred was inextinguishable.

The [Zhan Long] Steel Blade Horsemen held their ground against the

Gravedigger Demons. This alone was enough to display the advantage that the players had in battle. Whether it was [Drain], [Health Potions], or just the [Heal]s they received, each one of them was more than what an NPC could ever hope of receiving. After all, the NPC army didn't have healers, and could only rely on crude herbs and first aid to maintain their health.

After several long minutes, the crossbow cart arrows were finally restocked and we repeated the cycle. All the Royal Army soldiers were leveling up. These Gravedigger Demons granted copious amounts of experience.

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I galloped to the frontlines with my bloody Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword. Most of the Hybrid Demons weren't even humanoids and didn't have red blood. Of course that concept applied for these Gravediggers as well.

Right then, a man in the Royal Army group suddenly shouted, "What... what is this?"

I quickly forced my way through the crowd of people only to see a mound of dirt rise up from the ground. I felt my heart sink and I shouted, "Be careful of the ground, the Gravedigger Demons are tunneling under the ground!"

Even as I was talking, I lurched forward and sunk my Zhen Yue Blade into the dirt. "Pu Chi!" Black blood bubbled out. As I raised my Zhen Yue Blade, a Gravedigger Demon's head came along with it. I swung my Dragon Reservoir Sword out, slicing his neck. On the side, the Barbarian Blade and Shield soldiers as well as the Royal Army Horsemen quickly calmed down and began hacking at the onslaught of demons.

I raised my sword and walked forward, warning everyone, "Be careful, these Gravediggers are like groundhogs, their natural environment is underground. They can ambush us from the ground. Everyone, make sure to watch your feet as you fight. When the Gravediggers appear, a mound will rise up!"

Right as I was said that, I could hear shocked screams around the [Zhan

Long] players. The Gravedigger Demons moved extremely fast. More and more were appearing. They had completely given up on a frontal assault and switched to this kind of guerilla type ambush. Even the monsters were becoming more and more intelligent!

Li Mu roared, “Steel Blade Horsemen, split up and become tanks. Everyone, form small units and protect the ranged and support type players!”

[Zhan Long] quickly spread out and the members divided themselves into individual units. The Royal Army also split up similarly. I could tell how advanced Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing and Xia Ye’s strategy was. The Flame Dragon Army on the other hand didn’t act as quickly. The Gravedigger Demons’ ambush had caught them completely off guard, creating 20 minutes of chaos and disorganization. In the end, Theodore is the heir to the throne, and while the Flame Dragon Army is strong, most of their strength is derived from their numbers and quality of equipment. In terms of true battle power per soldier, I’m afraid the Royal Army is much better than the Flame Dragon Army.

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In the distance, I saw that several Tian Ling City guilds were falling apart. The underground ambush by the Gravedigger Demons was like a nightmare and didn’t give the players any warnings or chances to defend. This, however, wasn’t the true nightmare. Soon after, someone shouted, “Look, there’s something in the sky!”

My heart sank, and my first thought was that it was a Plunderer!

As I expected, those objects were the fierce, flight type monsters. Furthermore, these Plunderers had risen to Category 5 Hybrid Demons. Their attack power was even scarier. They screeched and rushed from the skies, diving straight for the densest masses—the Flame Dragon Army!

“Pu pu pu...”

Slashes of fresh blood poured out. The Flame Dragon Army Horsemen fell in the droves. Heads flew into the sky. The Flame Dragon Army’s formation loosened up.

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“They’re coming, those b*st*rds!” Han Yuan raised his blade and charged at the Plunderers.

Li Mu looked up at the sky and said, “Everyone... be careful. The attack power of those Plunderers is very scary....”

Chapter 819: Give and Take

“Ji, ji....:

The Plunderers opened their dark, toothy jaws. Everything about this monster was terrifying. The sharp canines in its mouth could freeze a man’s heart with fear. A swarm of Plunderers rushed to the ground, composing an attack formation. If that swarm swooped upon the Royal Army and the [Zhan Long] army.... I didn’t even need to think about how great the losses would be.

“What do we do?”

Long Xing shouted, “Archers, prepare to shoot!”

I clenched my teeth and leaped up from my horse. Right then, my Flying Scythe Horse let out a whinny as frost magic encircled the two of us and we rose up into the air. We were enveloped by magic like a fairy or an elf. “Peng!” The cape on my back fluttered in the air and a pair of wings sprung out. I rushed straight to the center of the Plunderers. I swung my sword mid-air, twisting my body along with it!

Qing Qian and Wei Liang both looked up into the sky, “Ah, Brother Xiao Yao’s skill... so cool!!”

“Peng!”

My blade spun through the crowd of Plunderers. [Frost Wing]’s effect was particularly fierce. Paired with the two god-tier weapons in my hands, I cut right through the swarm. At the same time, my arm, neck, and thighs were picked at by the Plunderers, draining away my health. The moment my health dipped, I released a [Sword Tempest]!

“Hong!”

This time, the attack had thrown the Plunderers attack formation into chaos. Right then, my health had just dropped below critical. I could hear a dragon whistle from behind my back as a pair of dragons wrapped around my body, protecting me from damage. Even so, my body was thrown back to the ground from the impact of their attacks.

“Ah.... piggy?”

As Wan Er was in the middle of fighting, she looked up and saw me. Without a moment's hesitation, she activated [Arrival of the Hermit God] and flew towards me. The dagger in her hands looked as if it were dancing and she pushed the Plunderers away from us. She then put her arm around my waist and slowed my descent. “Peng!” We landed on the shields of a few Steel Blade Horsemen before rolling to the ground. Thankfully, Wan Er had softened my impact, or else I would've left this expedition if I fell from that height with my critical health.

We didn't get a chance to catch a breath as the Plunderers rushed towards us. [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army raised their bows and wands, letting loose a slew of arrows and spells. People died around us in the droves, but the most miserable ones were not us—alternatively it was the Tian Ling City players in the distance. With Plunderers attacking from the sky and Gravediggers from the ground, there was no way for people to defend themselves. Even guilds like [Flying Dragon] and [Wrath of Heroes'] were being massacred; they found it hard to maintain stable footing.

I saw Drunken Spear leap up above the crowds with his spear raised above his head. He released a [Thousand Layer Wave] as he shouted, “Don't stand around archers, use [Scatter Shot], stun the Plunderers. The second they fall to the ground, all surrounding knights use [Charge] and [Hero's Ram] to lock onto them. There's nothing scary about them when they're on the ground. Don't let the deaths of our comrades go to waste! Attack! Mercy means death in this battle!”

As the [Flying Dragon] members took action, their formation began to stabilize as they settled down. Without a doubt, Drunken Spear is a rare natural born leader. Without him, who knows what hole [Flying Dragon] would end up in.

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In this battle on the plains, the several million players and the thousands of NPC troops took an a*s whooping from the ambush of

countless Graveyard Diggers and Plunderers. Even with this one battle, it was hard to determine if we would win or not. A loss this great was like a slap to the king's face. But, if the king wants to go down in history as a wise sage, he must first understand the strengths and weaknesses of his own forces. If the Hybrid Demons easily sweep through our armies, then I'm afraid history won't have room for a mediocre king like himself.

Time slowly passed by as the plains were quickly dyed red with blood. The Royal Army's formation began to shift towards a shield defense to allow for the archers and muskets to shoot down the Plunderers. The Flame Dragon Army on the other hand was in complete chaos. While Theodore's orders were organized and well thought out, the Flame Dragon Army did not have the training to execute them. The army that was known to be number one in the country had never experienced this much destruction. Faced against these terrifying Plunderers and Gravedigger Demons, they lost all direction and began grouping together amongst themselves. Additionally, there were too many soldiers in the Flame Dragon Army and each of the majors and lieutenants acted on their own. One of the idiots actually started firing Dragon Crystal Cannons into the sky. In the end, not only did the cannonball explode in the air, it actually fell back towards the Flame Dragon Army and exploded there, creating hundreds of casualties. However it didn't just affect the NPCs, even some of the [Legend]'s Azure Oxen Knights were killed as a result.

Enchanted Painting swung her halberd and charged out of a crowd of monsters, killing all the Gravedigger Demons in her assault. She looked around and couldn't help but raise a brow, "Are these NPCs pig heads? They actually... d*mn. Nobody try to stop me, I'm going to go and take the head of that lieutenant. That d*mn*d NPC..."

Fang Ge Que stood up in the crowd of people, and magic spells flew out in all directions. One after another, his spells shot down the Hybrid Demons. He calmly responded, "Ah Jin, don't be rash. We still need the strength of these NPC armies. It's not time to burn bridges just yet. No matter what, the Flame Dragon Army has over 150,000 troops. There's no helping it if some ill-qualified folk were to be mixed in...."

Little Scholar quipped, “Actually, after the last battle, they lost 10,000 knights. Not to mention the 7,000 they lost to the Gravedigger Demon trap. And now, with these Plunderers ambushing from the sky, they must’ve lost at least 30,000. At the very most, the Flame Dragon Army now has 100,000.

Enchanted Painting grimaced, “We haven’t even reached the city and we’ve already lost this many people. Can’t that Crown Prince improve his orders.... Boss, did we pick the wrong army by choosing the Flame Dragon Army? If only we followed the Royal Army in the first place... Their formation is pretty good, and they’ve been receiving quite a bit of good will from the king. Not to mention the commander is quite handsome...”

Fang Ge Que was speechless, “Ah Jin, do you think Li Xiao Yao is handsome too? I never would’ve thought that you were also one of those shameless fangirls...”

Enchanted Painting giggled from her horse, “Boss, are you jealous? Ha, don’t be angry. After all, the one I love the most will always be you. Now that I think about it, when can I get a raise? What fairness is there for an elder like me to be receiving the same salary as a sh*tty flag bearer like Little Scholar!”

Little Scholar nearly fell out of his saddle, “What, who’s a sh*tty flag bearer? Motherf*cker, I’ve been running all across the entire battlefield, fighting for everyone. At the very least, my efforts should be recognized....”

Looks like [Legend] was fairly relaxed, as they were having conversations while they were fighting. Clearly, they were very collected.

[Hero’s Mound], [Judgement], and [Vanguard] on the other hand weren’t faring quite as well. They had lost a large fraction of their forces and their morale had taken a great hit.

.....

After close to two hours of bitter fighting, we had finally killed all the Gravedigger Demons in the ground and the Plunderers in the sky were quickly diminishing. The Plunderers’ ambush was truly fearsome, but the moment they fell to the ground, they were like bullseyes for the archers

and were quickly killed. Like this, the skirmish finally ended.

I addressed [Zhan Long]'s men and asked, "How are our losses?"

Wan Er smiled and said, "We've pretty much preserved most of our forces. Looks like [Zhan Long] lost less than 5,000 men. Don't worry, even after we die, we can revive. You should pay a little more attention to your Royal Army. Those are your real cards, piggy!"

I smiled and gave my incredible girlfriend a hug, "Then I'll leave [Zhan Long] to you, Li Mu, and Qing Qian. I'll focus more on the Royal Army side. I can't let my hard work building up to 50,000 men go to waste so easily."

"Yup yup!"

I turned around and walked straight towards the center of the Royal Army. I could see Han Yuan and Xiao Lie in the middle of doing a headcount. When they saw me walking over, Han Yuan became excited and smiled at me, "General, we've killed close to 70,000 Hybrid Demons in this one battle, it's absolutely amazing!"

I asked, "How many did we lose?"

Xiao Lie reported back, "Less than four thousand."

I felt a twang of pain in my heart and said, "We aren't even close to the Revered One's City and we've already lost this many people... isn't that a bit much? Once we launch a siege on the city, who knows how many won't be able to return to the homeland from our Royal Army."

Long Xing comforted me, "Lord General, do not let this bring you down. We are all men of the military. The moment we joined the army, we already decided to set matters of life and death aside. Besides, our brothers died on the battlefield. That is the most perfect ending for them as they return to the arms of our heavenly mother, is it not?"

I smiled, "Perhaps it is. You four, follow me. We're going to see His Highness. After all, he is the marshall of this expedition. We shouldn't make any decisions without consulting him first."

“Yes sir!”

.....

I led the four generals towards the Flame Dragon position. On the way there we passed by hundreds of corpses scattered on the ground. Just from the scenery before us, we could tell that the Flame Dragon Army had taken heavy losses. Standing at the center, Theodore's face was pale. I could see the Marshall Sword in his hand trembling. A large group of lieutenants and majors were solemnly standing beside him.

“General Li, you've arrived?” Theodore addressed me calmly, and I could see his eyes soften with dislike towards me. Looks like this last battle has shaken his conviction quite a bit, but it's also decreased his wariness towards me.

I nodded, “Your Highness, I came to ask what our next steps are. There's a large ditch just before us that the Gravedigger Demons have dug out. Our soldiers might be able to climb across it, but none of our rations will make it over. All the normal cannons and the Dragon Crystal Cannons are absolutely necessary in a siege, so we have to bring them across.”

“All we need to do is fill it in...” Theodore calmly replied.

Han Yuan was stunned, “Your Highness, you want us to dig up some dirt to fill in the ditch? Keep in mind, we didn't bring any shoveling tools for this. We didn't even bring any laborers with us.”

Theodore looked at the masses of corpses and said, “That's simple, we'll throw the corpses into the ditch. As such, it'll naturally fill up.”

“What?!”

The Flame Dragon officers were stunned, “Your Highness, those are our brothers. If we use their noble bodies to fill in a ditch, when we die one day, how will we face them in Heaven?”

Theodore replied calmly, “If even their bodies can be used to assist the kingdom, then I don't think our brothers would be opposed to the idea, isn't that right? General Li Xiao Yao, what do you think?”

.....

Han Yuan and Long Xing all stared at me intently, anxiously waiting for my reply. I hesitated for a moment and finally said, "Everything is as His Highness commands..."

I could see a flash of dismay in Long Xing's eyes. I locked my eyes with his and patted his shoulder. I quietly said, "This is what the circumstances are, there's no choice but to accept it!"

I could see a flash of hope in Long Xing's eyes and he lowered his voice, "I understand. Commander, do not worry. I understand how you feel. After all, I have been forced into many situations similar to this!"

"Okay."

Chapter 820: Gawain's Reinforcements

“Thump thump thump...”

One after another, the bodies thudded as they were thrown into the deep ditch that the Gravedigger Demons had dug out. The Flame Dragon Army took the most losses, as tens of thousands of bodies created a hundred-meter-wide path. The soldiers laid down wooden planks on top of the bodies, allowing the cannons to roll over smoothly. There was a strong contrast between the Royal and the Flame Dragon Armies as the Royal Army's losses only created a single pile in the ditch. Han Yuan, Long Xing, and Xia Ye scattered hot oil on the bodies and lit them on fire. “Pa, pa, pa.” The smoke burned our eyes red. Han Yuan turned around with his blade over his shoulder and shouted, “Nevermind, let's go!”

Long Xing nodded and solemnly followed behind. The Royal Army fell back into formation and marched forward. In the distance, the men from the Flame Dragon Army indignantly glared at us, as though we had committed some injustice.

The player group also crossed over the ditch using the human bridge. The wind elf players on the other hand chose to fly across. I urged my Flying Scythe Horse forward and led the Steel Blade Horsemen and the Royal Army across the bridge. Behind us were carriages that held the cannons and the machinery. “Ji, ji.” The planks creaked as they rolled across—it was as though the bodies beneath the planks were crying out. Han Yuan and the other generals couldn't help but wrinkle their brows and slightly cringe with each sound.

The great army quickly passed over the ditch and continued its journey north. Theodore rode on his great horse with his head held high. Despite the past losses, the aura of heroism only increased as the journey progressed. He looked at the distant city and said, “The Revered One's kingdom. This time I want to see just what other tricks you have up your sleeve!”

One of the lieutenants asked, “Your Highness, are we launching a siege

directly on the city?”

Theodore gave a curt nod, “Yes. No need to hesitate, full speed ahead!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

I led the Royal Army and took the rear. Seeing how earnest the Flame Dragon Army was in their plan, I couldn’t help but feel restless. Even though the Revered One had lost many troops in the Battle of the Sea of No Return, that must’ve been only a fraction of his real forces. Besides, the Revered One’s City isn’t a particularly fortified stronghold. Both Frost and I visited the place before. Using that city to hold off the tens of thousands of Tian Ling City forces was not the smartest move on their part. If that were the case, what was Luo Lin’s true plan for this battle?

Even I couldn’t come up with the answer to that question. I tightened my grip on my Dragon Reservoir Sword. Whatever, nevertheless, we were here now. There was no other choice but to deal with the city before us as we could only continue to march forward.

“Prepare, and attack!”

Theodore raised his Marshall Sword above his head and gave the command. The sword itself was a symbol of military authority. It was a weapon that could command entire armies. The moment Theodore raised this Marshall Sword, all of the Flame Dragon Army knights rushed at the city. They were less than a thousand meters away from the city. We were so close we could see the countless soldiers they had on the walls.

“Ji ya....”

Right then, the great gates of the city suddenly opened up. Closely after that, a ferocious group of heavily armored silver soldiers rushed out carrying a mixture of halbers, swords, and battle axes. Behind the footsoldiers was a clean formation of knights. Each one was outfitted in a full suit of silver armor and a large, thick shield. Just as I had predicted, Luo Lin had asked for reinforcements. These troops were the Storm Abyss Kingdom’s troops and their marshall was the Son of the Storm - Gawain, ranked seventh among the Demon Kings!

“They’re here!” Han Yuan roared.

I immediately ordered, “Defense formations! Do not charge them head on!”

“Yes, sir!”

I could already see the level and stats of these monsters. They were Level 156 Tier 6 Hybrid Demons. These monsters were on another level compared to the ones we faced at the Sea of No Return. If we charged at them head on, I’m afraid that all ten thousand of the Royal Army horsemen would be killed with one blow. The difference in their strengths and stats was too high. We could only defeat these monsters by fighting alongside the players.

Li Mu barked out more orders, “Steel Blade Horsemen, defense formations!”

Dong Cheng, Dancing Forest, and Thousand Suns all raised their weapons, ready to cast their attack spells. [Legend], [Hero’s Mound], and [Vanguard]’s guild all sent out their orders to raise defenses. All of them knew just how terrifying these Hybrid Demons were and didn’t dare underestimate the enemy. Liu Ying, on the other hand, raised his sword high in the air and shouted, “[Wrath of Heroes], charge! We’ll charge with the Flame Dragon Army!”

[Wrath of Heroes]’ Dawn Hero, Drunken Cold Rain and the other knight class players rushed forward. On the side, Ye Lai was stupefied as he muttered, “D*mn, those [Wrath of Heroes] players have guts. Do they not care about their lives anymore?”

Far in the distance, the Blizzard Army cavalry corps began accelerating. All of them raised the shield on their left arm up high, while they reached for the throwing spears beside their saddles. “Shua!” The spears flew into the air and pierced through the player troop of the Flame Dragon Army. [Wrath of Heroes]’ Dawn Hero took three hits in a row. One after another the damage numbers flew up—

“26136 ! ”

“22441 ! ”

“27569 ! ”

“Ah....” With a cry, Dawn Hero clutched his chest and fell off his horses. “Pa ta!” His corpse was trampled underfoot by the Blizzard Army.

Drunken Cold Rain parried the projectiles with his shield. It wasn’t until he had lead his several thousand knights halfway across the field before he realized that only a few [Wrath of Heroes] players were left. His face turned green, “F*ck, what kind of attack power is this?!”

Little Piggy’s eyes were red. He raised his musket and shouted, “Everyone retreat! Assume a shield formation and protect all the ranged players. We can’t take these Hybrid Demon Troops head on!”

Liu Ying was stupefied. He tightened his fist, “Sh*t, isn’t this too OP?”

On the other side of the field, Wang Ze Cheng had appeared as well. He was dressed in awe-inspiring armor with a halberd that looked like it was painted with the colors of the sky. He rode in on a fiery red horse. Despite the costume, it was clear that this trash’s strength was nothing compared to the real General Lu Bu. On the other hand, with Yan Suo sitting on his horse, it did look as though General Lu Bu was carrying the legendary beauty, Diao Chan*.

[Hero’s Mound: Division One], which was under Wang Ze Cheng’s command, was practically a separate entity from the original [Hero’s Mound]. They only worked together on the surface due to their respect for Wang Ze Cheng. Under Division One, there were about a dozen other divisions, giving Wang Ze Cheng around 30,000 troops. Of course, this was an army raised purely on money, and as such their battle power was nothing great. But, they did have strength in numbers, and they weren’t easily provoked.

There was a long history of enmity between [Zhen Long] and Wang Ze Cheng. The only issue this time was that there just wasn’t enough time to deal with them. No matter what, Luo Ling and Gawain’s armies were enough to throw Wang Ze Chang’s 30,000 men into chaos.

Yan Suo sat on Wang Ze Cheng's lap. She picked up her dagger and slid off his horse, "My love, when are you going to help me get my [Unrivaled Spirit]?"

Wang Ze Cheng's mouth twitched, "That skill book is just too hard to get. Out of everyone in Tian Ling City, only a few assassins possess it. Are you envious because [Zhan Long]'s Lin Wan Er, Qing Qian, and Wei Liang all have it?"

Yan Suo stuck her chest out and glanced at [Zhan Long]'s front, "Hmph, Lin Wan Er? You must still be pining for her, aren't you?"

Wang Ze Cheng's expression turned cold, "So what if that is true?"

Yan Suo stiffened, and she murmured, "Just what am I to you? Am I your lover or am I just a plaything?"

Wang Ze Cheng chose not to answer. He raised his halberd and charged ahead, shouting, "Set up a defensive formation and prepare to receive this wave!"

In the next moment, the Blizzard Army troops arrived right before them, Battle Horses whinnied as they rammed against the shields. "Peng, peng, peng!" The impact was terrifying. Some of the knights were thrown back from the force. The first charge was enough to push through 4 to 7 layers of defense before they were finally stopped. The Demon troops raised their spears and charged ahead, their blades flashing in the light. The spear cut through the mass of people. In a split second, AOE skills flashed, dealing massive damage to the knights. Just that one attack was enough to make [Zhan Long] lose close to a hundred Steel Blade Horsemen.

"Ranged players, increase the pressure!" I shouted.

[Zhan Long]'s ranged players were already firing away. Facing these fierce Blizzard troops with their numbers was incredibly difficult to deal with, making it impossible to not take losses.

I raised my blade and rushed into the fray. As I slashed and cut through the monsters, my attacks were starting to lack strength and power. I roared, activating [Ice Wing]s, gaining those boosts. The icy power seeped

into my body, creating a pair of wings on my back. My Zhen Yue Blade and Dragon Reservoir Sword now displayed a 5-yard long attack range. Just one slash dealt AOE damage. Not to mention, this sword range could be overlaid with other skills. The killing power was incredible. The price of this was 1G per second. However, my bag was filled to the brim with gold, I paid no mind to it!

I swept through the Blizzard Troops with my Zhen Yue Blade. “Shua!” The icy blade flashed through, and I dealt a [Tempest Sword], dropping the health of all the monsters around me. Level 6 Hybrid Demons couldn’t defend against my attack at all—

“27161 ! ”

“26171 ! ”

“57784 ! ”

That critical attack was the most fearsome one. The Steel Blade Horsemen around me were all gaping, “D*mn, the guildmaster’s attack power is just inhuman!”

I didn’t have the leisure time to chat with them. I was switching between giving orders to the Royal Army and roaming the front and the back lines of the [Zhan Long] formation to decrease the pressure on them as much as I could. At the same time, Wan Er activated her [Unrivaled Spirit], and her [Heavenly Armor] as she walked back and forth on the frontlines. Li Mu, Wang Jian, and the others were leading a group of knights dressed in Deer Cry Armor to hold off the onslaught of attacks, while Darling Duck and the other healers locked their spells onto the players in the front row, fighting to maintain the root of our formation. It was only because of these efforts that we were able to prevent these Tier 6 Hybrid Demons from breaking through our formation.

Unfortunately, the good times don’t last. Not long afterwards, another group of people charged out from the Revered One’s City. They were all archers riding on horses. This time, it was Luo Lin’s troops. Players began to die in the droves around them. These were Tier 6 ranged attackers. There was no difference between those and a nightmare for cloth armor

type players like archers, ranged attackers, and assassins.

Chapter 821: "Be True To Your Followers To Gain Fealty"

“Keng keng keng...”

After three consecutive arrows bounced off the Lion King Shield, Matcha moved her arm away and began hacking at the enemy monsters with her sword. She impatiently said, “We can’t go on like this, the Revered One’s Archers’ attack power is too strong, not to mention they’ve been focusing their attacks on our front lines. If this keeps going, we’ll end up getting pushed back.”

I swung my sword and readily replied, “Matcha, why don’t you activate the effect from the Lion King Shield? I’ll take 5,000 of our Steel Blade Horsemen and rush at the enemy. If we cut them all down in one fell swoop, we’ll make sure they don’t come back for a long time!”

Wang Jian nodded, “Agreed!”

Matcha sunk her shield into the ground. Rays of light began to shoot off from the body. Not only [Zhan Long], but even nearby soldiers from the Royal Army, [Legend], and [Judgement], received a BUFF from the effect. My Zhen Yue Blade shuddered as I activated [Zhen Yue Battle Song]. Once I received all my BUFFs, I led Li Mu, Wang Jian, and the first and second infantries of the Steel Blade Horsemen to charge at the [Blizzard] army, and we aimed straight for the cavalry archers.

“Pu pu.....”

I could hear arrows whizzing past my ear and burying the nearby players. One after another, members of [Zhan Long] were falling beside me. What made it worse was the fact that the Revered One’s Archers were incredibly intelligent. They actually knew how to retreat while shooting at us, and they used kiting method to whittle away at the Steel Blade Horsemen. Li Mu’s eyes nearly rolled out of his skull, “This... how the f*ck are we supposed to fight against this?”

The [Frost Wing]s on my back began to shudder and I rose up into the

sky. As I did so, the vanguard of my Zhen Yue Blade extended out, creating an energy blade that fell among the crowds of people. I ordered, “Everyone split up and charge full speed ahead. We’ll surround them from the sides and flank them!”

“Yes sir!”

In this troop of Hybrid Demons, there were at least 50,000 of the Revered One’s Archers, but there was no way for us to kill every single one of them. All we could do was focus on the 4,000 that were targeting [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army to decrease the pressure on them. After all, we weren’t world saviors—we couldn’t save them all.

Li Mu and Wang Jian led a group of people while Matcha and Wan Er lead another. I continued leading my troop in the front and faced the monsters head on. The archers’ attack power was not nearly enough to break through my defenses. In fact, the combos from my blade were like a nightmare for these archers. Blood splattered and they fell one after another, turning into achievement points for me.

After a few minutes, we had them completely surrounded and we slaughtered them like sheep. Even if we took heavy losses, we had to kill all 4,000 of these archers. Wan Er activated her [Undefeated Spirit] state and darted in and out of the crowd of monsters, leaving corpses in her wake. Old K on the other hand raised his Blood Giant’s Battle Axe and activated [Kehl’s Rage]. A powerful aura began to emanate from him and a powerful wind rose up. He dashed forward, turning into a whirlwind that raged through the crowd of monsters. All enemies caught in his path were ripped to pieces. Even if Old K didn’t have as much damage, with this skill, he was far more than capable of instantly killing these ten thousand health archers.

Li Mu and Wang Jian all activated their AOE attacks and charged ahead. The rest of the Steel Blade Horsemen activated all their defense type skills to protect their healths before focusing all their energy on attacking. Unfortunately, this battle style meant that we would be faced with startling loses under the attack of the thousands of Blizzard soldiers and these archers. After ten minutes, all the super BUFFs ran out. Despite that,

we couldn't retreat, not until all of these archers were killed.

.....

I flew into the sky and threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash] into the enemy pursuers. I glanced at the Zhen Yue Blade in my left hand. Blood had completely covered the elegant engravings that used to be there. I dashed to the rear of the Steel Blade Horsemen and asked, "Li Mu, how many people did we lose this time?"

Li Mu glanced around and said, "Of the five thousand horsemen we brought, we lost 1,400. Not too bad?"

"That's terrible. Hurry up and head back! Everyone needs to get back in the healers' range!"

"Yes sir!"

When we returned to our troops, I went to check on the Royal Army's situation only to see a number of corpses lying on the ground. Even with the cover from the Steel Blade Horsemen, they still lost a lot of soldiers. I couldn't help but feel a pang in my heart. But, after carefully counting, I noticed that we had lost a thousand men at most. After the battle at the Sea of No Return, these Royal Army soldiers had increased the level of their equipment and attacks by quite a bit. Since their battle power increased so much, they became much harder to kill. At the very least, they were not as easy to kill as they had been during the previous battle.

I looked at the distant city as I hacked down a monster. I could make out two figures at the top of the wall. It was Luo Lin and Gawain. Both of them were originally human generals who had fallen to Demon status because of their hubris. And there they were, having a lighthearted conversation as they ordered their troops to slaughter their own people.

"Han Yuan!" I growled.

Han Yuan cut off the head of one of the Blizzard soldiers and turned around to face me, "General, what do you need?"

I gave a nod and pointed at the wall, "Can the cannons and the Dragon Crystal Cannons reach that wall? If they can, why don't we call Luo Lin

and Gawain down for a final battle!”

Han Yuan gaped at me, “General, the cannons and the Dragon Crystal Cannons have a maximum range of 700 meters. We’re more than 1,100 meters away. I’m afraid we can’t do that. Besides... look at our situation right now. This battle is in complete chaos. Even if we wanted to, we won’t be able to use the cannons, or else we’ll hurt our own brothers. For the moment, all we can use are the crossbow carts!”

I clenched my teeth, “Then bring out the crossbow carts for support. Otherwise, we’ll be taking too many heavy losses!”

“Yes sir!”

After a few minutes, several hundred crossbow carts appeared on the frontlines of the Royal Army. Heavy shields protected the carts from damage. In the blink of an eye, we dealt an astonishing blow to the Hybrid Demon troops.

Over at the Flame Dragon Army, I saw a group of Blade and Shield soldiers charging at the Demon Army, pushing them back 300 meters. All of them were drenched in blood. No wonder the Flame Dragon Army was known to be the number one army in Tian Ling City. This kind of bravery and courage was second to no other.

Right then, I could hear the sounds of cannons firing from behind the Flame Dragon Army. The explosions rang continuously and cannon balls rained from the sky. Some of the Dragon Crystal Cannon balls had fallen right at the center of the formation. Crowds of people were clustered in that one spot—not only the Hybrid Demons, but also the human Blade and Shield soldiers. The explosions immediately turned these people into mush. This was the might of the Dragon Crystal Cannons—in the blink of an eye it brought death to an entire area.

“AHHH!” Han Yuan’s eyes widened, burning red with tears. His voice trembled, “Theodore, what’s he doing? Does he not care about his own people?!”

I clenched my teeth, my blood running cold. Was this the kind of tactic that the AI in this game was using? If we used whatever underhanded

tactics we could, then what difference was there between us and the Demons?

Without another word, I activated my [Frost Wing]s and immediately flew over to the Flame Dragon Army formation. They continued firing the cannons across the entire battlefield, killing both NPCs and Demons alike. This was no small matter; if this continued, the players would undoubtedly start complaining to the system admins!

I walked straight into the Flame Dragon Army's war tent and roared, "Your Highness, why are you firing the cannons? Don't you understand that they are killing our own people!?"

Theodore was sitting on a makeshift throne at the end of the tent, with a cup of wine in his hand. He smiled at me, "Commander Li, do not panic. There are no norms on the battlefield. Strategists of the past have said that the dynamics of a battle constantly shift like the water. To be able to evolve and turn a situation in your favor is the holy grail of strategy. You've seen the situation. Gawain and Luo Lin are working together now. Their added might is above the Tian Ling City's Army. If we don't take this chance to use extreme measures, how else would we win? Those two thousand warriors are all kamikaze soldiers that I personally picked from my Flame Dragon Army. They decided for themselves that they were willing to die for the empire. If I could exchange two thousand lives for the lives of my twenty thousand men, then I would do so again, without hesitation. Commander Li, you are an educated man, and you've read about all the tactics. This should not be a difficult principle for you to comprehend."

Han Yuan spat on the ground, "Did you think that using flowery words would change the outcome? You're stealing people's lives!"

Theodore angrily shouted back, "Major Han Yuan, this is not the first time you have offended me, and yet time and time again I have shown mercy. Do not think it is because I don't dare to kill you. I carry the Marshall's Sword. Killing you is as easy as stepping on an ant!"

I reached my hand out to hold back Han Yuan and calmly replied, "Your

Highness, it is also said in the Art of War that while using your soldiers, 'Be true to your followers to gain their fealty.' If you kill our own men with these Dragon Crystal Cannons, are you not worried about your soldiers losing faith in you? Are you not afraid of losing control of your army?"

Theodore's expression stiffened, "Li Xiao Yao, I will take care of matters within my own army, there is no need for the commander of the Royal Army to stick his nose in these matters. Men, please escort Commander Li back to his army!"

I clenched my teeth and turned around, "Han Yuan, we're leaving!"

.....

On the way back, I felt my heart grow cold. I never would have thought that Theodore would be so stubborn to go this far. But, when I carefully reflected on it, it wasn't entirely without reason. He needed this victory far too much—after all, he'd gambled his seat on the throne for it. In this one expedition, just entering the Hero's Graveyard was enough to make the Flame Dragon Army lose tens of thousands of men. If he didn't use this kind of cruel "exchange" to kill more Hybrid Demons, then it would be difficult for the Flame Dragon Army to leave any mark on history in this war.

Even so, there was no way for me to accept this kind of decision, especially in this kind of situation when even the players were being killed by the Dragon Crystal Cannons. What made this so hard to fathom was the fact that Theodore's cruel decision will undoubtedly trigger a change of heart among the soldiers of the Flame Dragon Army. With a single spark, any number of unforeseeable consequences could emerge.

The Revered One's City gates have been open throughout this battle and a steady flow of Blizzard Army soldiers and the Revered One's troops have been marching towards our army, ready to surround the Royal Army and the players around it. The Dragon City Army on the other hand was as still as a mountain. Frost did not advance or retreat. Instead, the army held their ground, killing all enemies that came their way. In her mind, there was no need for glory or greed for achievement. All she cared about was

revenge, and perhaps protecting the seven kingdoms?

.....

Time went by slowly. The battle was nearing seven hours long. In the real world, it was around ten o'clock at night. Even so, the battle showed no signs of reaching an end. Gawain must be putting all of his forces into this one battle. Even after so many Blizzard soldiers died, Gawain still provided a steady flow of reinforcements to the city.

Wan Er walked over with her dagger in hand and smiled, "Honey, how about we log off and get something to eat?"

I could feel my stomach grumble. If I kept doing this, it would affect my focus on the battle. So I nodded, "Alright, how about everyone split up into groups and log off in shifts to get some rest? Afterwards, I'll log back on. Tonight will be an all-nighter!"

"Alright!"

Chapter 822: Gawain'S Secret Weapon

After I logged off, I ate a simple dinner and took a quick shower. Everything took less than half an hour to complete. I logged back on as soon as I could to get back into battle. It was only half an hour after I logged on that Wan Er and Dong Cheng finally came back. The two girls were slower than usual. When they logged back on I couldn't help but comment, "Did you girls take forty minutes to shower?"

Dong Cheng raised her Deer Cry Staff and wryly smiled, "We came after fixing our makeup, duh..."

"Makeup?" I was speechless, "Does makeup increase your stats?"

"Nope!"

Wan Er smiled, "Well, our opponents are Luo Lin and Gawain. We can lose soldiers but we can't lose our footing. That's why we put on makeup before battle!"

I was completely defeated by the two brats. On the other hand, the other [Zhan Long] players died on the spot. They had seen these two beauties in person before, but seeing them play coy and being mischievous like that was the finishing blow for them.

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The battle situation was not very optimistic. When we activated the Dragon Crystal Cannons around seven hundred feet away from the city, we realized that the cannon balls couldn't penetrate the city walls. The only remaining strategy that was left was to attack the city head-on. However, the problem was that Gawain and Luo Lin were both guarding the city walls. Attacking it was no easy task.

Below the city walls, there was a chaotic fray of humans and demons alike. Healing light rays flashed across the battlefield, resting on the players. Theodore had his Marshall's Sword in hand and he stood on the stage of the central tent, his face content. It was as though losing 80,000 of his 150,000 men was enough of a sacrifice for him to deserve victory.

But, based on what I observed, there were actually not many Hybrid Demons left in the city. It was for that reason that Gawain and Luo Lin's expressions were steadily growing uglier. They must have never imagined that Tian Ling City's determination would be so great, and our might so strong.

I carefully studied the system interface. Of the millions of players that came, only hundreds of thousands were left remaining. As for the achievement rankings, I remained firmly in first place. The boost my [Frost Wing]s gave me was just too strong. Even a crazy monster like Fan Ge Que couldn't beat me. If everything went smoothly, then I'd be number one on the rankings again—

Li Xiao Yao Achievement: 771

Fang Ge Que Achievement: 698

Simple Achievement: 664

Cang Yue Achievement: 659

Mu Xuan Achievement: 622

Cang Tong Achievement: 591

Ye Lai Achievement: 585

Drunken Spear Achievement: 570

Q-Sword Achievement: 554

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Fang Ge Que was in second place, while Simple and Dong Cheng Yue were close behind. The gaps between them all were very narrow. Mu Xuan and Wan Er were in fifth and sixth place respectively. Seventh place went to Enchanted Painting. That little girl didn't have many area of effect attacks, and she usually couldn't even get into the top ten. But now that she had a country weapon, she easily made it into the top seven. Closely following her were Ye Lai, Drunken Spear, and Q-Sword. Unfortunately, Jian Feng Han and Yan Zhao Warrior didn't even make the top ten. There were numerous high-level players in Tian Ling City, and the competition

was fierce. They were barely in the top twenty....

Last time we received rewards, we didn't have much experience with the format and we didn't know what to do. But this time, if all goes well, everyone would get to choose to exchange their achievement points for Military Achievements. Fang Ge Que and Drunken Spear both got the sweet end of the deal. I, on the other hand, was an example among the players. Everyone knew how I assumed this position as the Commander of the Royal Army. All of the youths in the game dreamt of becoming the commander of their own armies. After all, there was no end to a grand dream.

In the blink of an eye, another half hour passed and there was finally a break in between the Hybrid Demon attacks. Luo Lin shouted the orders, "Close the gates!"

A few bulky giants began to turn the handle, closing the great gates. The moment the great gates were slammed shut, we all realized that they were completely fire-resistant and they wouldn't fall to an explosion. The steel doors were an entire meter thick. Normal slashes were like an itch. Rather than ramming the doors down, we might as well just scale the wall.

Seeing the flow of monsters stop, the increase in achievement points also slowed to a stop. At that point, quite a few started to panic. Soaring Dragon raised his staff and walked up to the gates and shouted, "Why don't the NPCs just lay siege on the city? What are they getting paid for?"

Drunken Spear calmly reminded him, "Do not worry."

Fierce Tiger raised his battle axe and smiled, "Boss, how about I take three thousand brothers and test out the city? Look, the NPCs have already brought over the ladders. If we just take them, we'll go straight to Luo Lin and Gawain."

Drunken Spear chuckled.

Fierce Tiger glared, "Little flower, what the f*ck are you laughing at?"

Drunken Spear turned his horse around and pointed at the Flame Dragon Army, "Tiger Bro, look, the Flame Dragon Army's cannons are still

red. A drop of sweat will evaporate right off it. By the time you take your men to attack the city walls, the all mighty Crown Prince Theodore will release another round of cannons at the wall. Let's see how bitterly you die then."

Sweat formed on Fierce Tiger's forehead, "D*mm*t, alright then, I'll just wait for the NPCs to start first."

Soaring Dragon cautiously looked at the Royal Army's formation and said, "Compared to the Flame Dragon Army, the Royal Army doesn't lack that many fewer cannons. Do you suppose Li Xiao Yao is using this expedition as a way to take revenge... he wouldn't point those cannons at enemy guilds would he... Our [Flying Dragon] wouldn't be spared from his hit list..."

Drunken Spear chuckled again, "Boss, don't worry about that. Li Xiao Yao isn't that kind of man. If he really were that petty, I'm afraid that he would've long decimated our [Flying Dragon], or the [Wrath of Heroes], or the [Knights Templar]. Think about it. [Zhan Long] and Li Xiao Yao definitely have the power, they just decide to not use it."

Soaring Dragon nodded, "I hope it is as you say it is. D*mn, why haven't those NPC soldiers started attacking yet? Are they waiting to hold another meeting?"

"Don't worry, if you want to kill the Hybrid Demons, there will be plenty of chances. All you have to do is patiently wait!"

"Alright!"

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All of the players were restless and they shuffled around, but nobody made any direct attacks. After all, around seven to eight hundred thousand players had come, and now less than 10% were left. If this were a medieval battle, we would've admitted defeat before we even hit 20%. After all, at that point, the medieval soldiers would've already long lost faith. An army made up of villagers would probably end up shaking in their boots the second the enemy appeared anyway. Ultimately, it looks like a player army is the true army that is full of courage!

Unfortunately, this determination is built on the fundamental understanding that the players can revive after dying. If dying meant the end of life, I think most of the players and guilds here would just leave by pulling out their City Return Scrolls. Who would sacrifice their lives for a bullsh*t empire like ours?

Luo Lin stood at the top of the city wall with his weapon, Despair, in hand. He coldly looked down at the masses of the Tian Ling City soldiers and maliciously laughed, “D*mn, these bugs have actually managed to force their way to our gates. This humiliation is too great!”

Gawain grimly replied, “Almost all my men are dead. They are the last of the Blizzard empire’s warriors after all. Luo Lin, how do you plan on compensating me?”

Luo Lin smiled back, “Brother Gawain, don’t worry. After today, The mines in the Eastern Mountain Range are all yours. I will recruit some smiths among the humans to help you rebuild your weapons. Besides, as long as you still have the King’s Power, then after this battle, we can revive all the dead warriors. When that time comes, we’ll let these Tian Ling City ants fight their own soldiers!”

Gawain roared, “Alright, Luo Lin, this cruelty is exactly what I love about your personality!”

“Not at all, you’re flattering me. But what do we do now?” Luo Lin seemed a bit anxious. “How should we deal with their next attack on the city? You witnessed it yourself. Tian Ling has brought quite a few stepladders with them on this expedition!”

Luo Lin simply replied, “We’ll just order all your horseback archers to dismount and come to support the battle from the city walls. Naturally, I’ll activate my secret weapon. We can’t let those humans think that they’re the only ones in this city battle with firepower!”

“Oh, so that’s how it is.... Haha...” Luo Lin roared in laughter. It was so loud that even we could hear it. The taunting tone of his laugh was hard to miss.

Theodore picked up his Marshall’s Sword, his face green, “Men, attack

the city!”

Right then, heavy carts rolled on ahead, crunching over the ground below and bringing forward the battle machines. The step ladders in particular were pushed towards the city walls and were further protected by heavy shields and guards.

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Han Yuan walked up to me and asked, “Commander, are we attacking with them?”

If we let the Flame Dragon Army attack the walls on their own, it would make the Royal Army look as though we were cowards. I nodded, “Have the Blade and Shield troops protect the stepladders first. Maintain the position of the cavalry. This isn’t their battlefield.”

“Yes sir, I will personally lead our men!”

“Good.” All of a sudden, I felt a little apprehensive and shouted, “Han Yuan, wait!”

Han Yuan turned around, “What is it sir?”

I added a warning, “Don’t take Luo Lin and Gawain head-on. You can’t fight them. I want you to come back alive!”

Han Yuan smiled, “General, don’t worry. From the day I joined the military, I have already looked past the matters of life and death. But, it is as General said, I will do my best to come back alive!”

I laughed, “Alright then, go on!”

I looked over at Li Mu, Wan Er, and the rest in the distance. I typed in the guild chat: “[Zhan Long] should attack the walls too. We can’t just let the NPCs fight by themselves. They won’t be able to hold their positions. I have a feeling that Luo Lin and Gawain are still hiding cards up their sleeves.”

Wan Er piped up, “Agreed!”

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[Zhan Long]'s army pushed forward alongside the NPCs. Everyone understood that we were interdependent on the NPCs. [Judgement] and [Hero's Mound] followed suit because of this. One after another, the step ladders fell against the great walls. We were but a step away from the city. Right then, droves of archers suddenly appeared at the top. They were armed with long bows and a powerful volley of arrows rained down on the NPCs and players.

At the foot of the walls, the guildmaster of [Thousand Mound] Not Ordinary commanded, "Greedy Wolf Troops, advance!"

You Yi and Minimalist led their Greedy Wolf Corps and rushed at the city. There was a whole legion of them. Looks like [Thousand Mound] managed to maintain their numbers fairly well. Those cowards...

Right then, a rumble sounded and numerous black cannons appeared at the top. There was a blood red magical aura emanating off the mouths of the cannons and I could even hear faint cries coming from them.

Gawain smugly said, "Ghoul Cannons, advance!"

"Peng!"

The cannons shuddered and a crimson ball fell from the city walls. "Hong!" It exploded among the Greedy Wolf Raiders and the humans. One after another, damages of over 50,000 flew up. Close to a hundred Greedy Wolf Raiders were instantly killed. Those who managed to survive were left with critical health. One player's face went pale, "Motherf*cker, what kind of cannon is that..."

Chapter 823: Destruction of a Holy Weapon

The moment those Ghoul Cannons appeared, Tian Ling City's great troops made a split second decision. Those Ghoul Cannons fired one after another at the numerous human troops. Furthermore, Ghoul Cannons could instantaneously produce high temperatures of over 3000 degrees. Almost everything in its vicinity would get incinerated. Just a few of those cannonballs were enough to kill several hundred men. I couldn't help but feel my gut wrench at the sight before me. The only way to bring my army back to a five thousand man count would be to find and recruit some new barbarians from the Barbarian Lands.

"Peng...."

One of the Ghoul Cannonballs fell at the center of the Flame Dragon Cavalry. This time, Theodore personally led the charge with a golden shield tied to his arm and his Marshall's Sword in hand. He roared, "Victory rests on this last attack. Charge! As long as we get close to the walls, their cannons will be useless. Scale the walls and destroy those Ghoul Cannons!"

Cannon fire continuously burst from the walls. Despite that, masses of brave Tian Ling Soldiers continued surging ahead. Many of the cavalymen who reached the city abandoned their horses to climb the stepladders. Unfortunately, the archers standing on top of the wall weren't there for decoration. They released a volley of arrows that fell upon the Flame Dragon Army and the players like rain. The attack power was terrifying!

Hooves trampled across the earth as ten thousand Steel Blade Horsemen charged at the walls. I urged my Flying Scythe Horse ahead of the crowd, leading the army forward. Running alongside [Zhan Long] were [Judgement]'s Ice Ram Knights and [Legend]'s Azure Ox Horsemen. Numerous groups of players were running straight at the cannonfire. Meng Yao, Matcha, and Yao Yan were among the front lines of players.

They had raised their shields early on, blocking the arrows and decreasing the damage to the players nearby.

“Hua...”

I swept out my blade and leaped from my horse. Frosty feathers fluttered around me as a pair of [Frost Wing]s burst from my back. “PA!” I stepped into the air and launched myself upward. With a sweep, I threw a [Seven Star Fragment Slash] right into the crowd of archers. I lurched forward and stabbed my Dragon Reservoir Sword in front of me, throwing a golden hexagram combo into the crowd of monsters. When a group of Magic Sword Masters came rushing at me, I stepped onto one of the stone bricks on the wall and “peng!”, released an ice aura in all directions, freezing them in their places. This granted valuable time for the horsemen and the Royal Army to crawl up the wall.

“D*mn*d b*st*rd...”

Not far from me, Gawain casted a disgusted glare in my direction. The Purple Wind Sword in his hand began to glow and he dashed at me, roaring, “Frost’s student? Accept your demise!”

The Purple Wind Sword came at me too quickly and I had no choice to parry the attack. “Keng!” I felt my entire left arm go numb. I nearly let go of my Zhen Yue Blade. Gawain moved even faster and knocked away my Zhen Yue Blade, throwing another slash at my chest. In that one attack, he managed to split right through the defense of my Hidden Dragon Armor—

“47187 ! ”

My [Wall of Dou Qi] was nearly shattered by the single blow. I immediately cast a [Cleansing Rain] while I was in the air and gulped down a health potion, refilling half of my health bar. Without waiting for me to catch my breath, Luo Lin came at me from the other side. He held his sword, Despair, with both hands and snickered, “Die!”

“Peng!”

“51772!”

This time, my [Wall of Dou Qi] broke apart and I shot towards the

ground like a bullet. Wind rushed past my ears before I fell into a pit at the bottom of the wall, covered in blood. I looked up at the wall only to see Luo Lin's foot on top of one of the Ghoul Cannons that was aimed right at me. "Peng!" A red cannonball flew right at me.

I clenched my teeth and struggled to get up, spreading my [Frost Wing]s out. I got on my feet and leaped into the air, flying straight forward in a Z-shape. "Peng, peng, peng." Explosions burst behind me. Thankfully, the Ghoul Cannons didn't fire particularly quickly, or else I would've died instantly.

On the wall, Han Yuan was leading a group of Royal Army soldiers in a charge right into the group of Hybrid Demons. He roared, "Kill them all, avenge the commander!"

It seems that too much dust and smoke had obscured the scene. Han Yuan thought that I had been killed by Gawain and Luo Lin.

Right then, Li Mu and Wan Er had directed their Steel Blade Horsemen to the top of the wall. [Legend] and [Judgement] had also taken heavy damages but they also made it to the top. The Tian Ling Army camp was taking this city no matter what. No matter how strong Luo Lin and Gawain were, they were just two mortals in the end. There was no way they could stand against tens of thousands of men and horses. Not to mention the fact that two high tier NPCs like Frost and Zi Shu were still on the battlefield. For Luo Lin and Gawain, this was akin to living a nightmare.

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After recovering all of my health, I raised my blade and charged back to the wall. Without a doubt, [Frost Wing] was an incredibly helpful skill. I didn't even have the altitude limit that other Wind Elves had. I could fly as high as I wanted to. If I were really bored, I could probably spend several hours flying upward. However, I wasn't particularly interested in exploring. After all, my current goal was to seize this city and minimize [Zhan Long] and the Royal Army's losses.

On the city wall, I heard the several dragon shrieks. Qing Luo had finally

guided her fifteen Dragon City Dragon Knights in the attack. Fifteen enormous dragons hovered above the wall. One after another, dragon spears and dragon swords that were filled with energy cut down the Ghoul Cannons. This was a critical hit for the Revered One's City.

"G*dd*m*t!"

Luo Lin roared and leaped off the wall. With Despair in one hand, he charged at one of the Silver Dragon Knights. The knight's name was Yu Ping. Seeing the boss charge right at him, he panicked and raised his spear to parry the blow. He did not know just how sharp Despair was. "Ka Cha!" The spear broke apart in his hands. "Bug, crawl on the ground where you belong!"

"Hong!"

A godly power gathered in Luo Lin's fist and in the next second, the Dou Qi from his Holy Domain rushed forward. Yu Ping, the Silver Dragon Knight, wailed and fell to the ground. A long cut opened up on the dragon's left wing. Silver blood spurted forward and the dragon screeched as it tried to crawl out of the ditch. As it gingerly protected the knight on its back, I could see it wince in pain.

Qing Luo's eyes burned red with tears. She raised her long sword and directed her dragon right at Luo Lin.

Right then, Frost stopped her and calmly said, "Qing Luo, back off. Leave Luo Lin to me."

Qing Luo nodded, "Yes, my lady!"

Luo Lin gripped Despair in his hands. He coldly smiled at Frost and said, "What, now that you're in a new body, you think you can win against my Despair? Frost, do you still remember how we used to duel each other in Dragon City? Have you ever beaten me?!"

Frost's eyes were cold and emotionless, "Do not bring up the past with me. You will never return to being the Luo Lin of the past, and I will never return to being the Frost of that time. If you really think that you are undefeatable, then let's exchange three blows first!"

“Come at me!”

Luo Lin’s arm shuddered and golden runes began to materialize. They began revolving around his body, and this was a skill that boosted his defense.

A smile appeared on Frost’s lips. She slightly raised her left hand and “Peng!”, lightly swatted away one of the Ghouls Cannons that was aimed at her. Like a mountain, she didn’t make much movement, but the power behind her blow was incredibly awesome. Her Severing Beauty Sword was completely wrapped in gold light. It was the power of a Superior Goddess. The light almost looked like a lotus flower. With her right hand, she threw a slash with her Severing Beauty Sword!

All of Luo Lin’s holy power was concentrated in his Despair. The energy of the sword created a golden light that protected his body.

“Peng!”

Frost’s sword came down upon him and threw him back a dozen meters. “Peng!” Luo Lin’s armor had completely shattered. In a frenzy, he had completely forgotten the previous deal to take three of her hits, and he launched Despair straight at Frost’s chest.

Frost clenched her teeth and formed an ice shield around her chest. Luo Lin’s Despair pierced through the shield, but it couldn’t scratch through her armor. Instead, he was thrown back by the force. Wind rose up around her slim and elegant body as Frost danced in the air before she opened her left hand to strike Luo Lin’s back with a lotus-shaped ice power!

“Ah....”

Luo Lin screeched and released the sword in his hand. The ice began to spread out from his back, making him shudder. His trembling right hand gripped his left arm as he shot a stunned look at Frost.

Frost elegantly reached out for Despair’s hilt and lightly pulled it out of its place with her shield. The ice shield released its hold on the weapon. Looking at Despair, Frost bit her bottom lip, “This is the demonic sword that takes away the humanity of men, making men fall to the Demon

tier?”

“Hua...”

A golden light rose from Frost’s palm and began to envelop Despair. Luo Lin’s expression turned to one of horror. He roared, “You, what are you doing?”

Without another word, Frost maintained her control over the weapon. With both hands, she channeled energy into Despair. After a few seconds, this undefeatable, godly weapon began to burn red. Soon after, it became so hot that it melted into liquid. Frost, was she planning on melting Despair?!

With one hand casting the energy over the crimson sword, Frost’s hatred was apparent in her expression, “This turned the leader I had sworn fealty to into a man who must die. I hate Despair!”

As she said that, she raised her hand and threw the melted sword into the air. “Peng!” It dispersed in the air and rushed to a distant mountain like bullets. A powerful breeze passed by us. Luo Lin was dumbfounded. He could barely make out the words, “This... how could this be...”

Chapter 824: A Sham Ending

That was the moment Luo Lin felt his first sliver of fear. Most of his strength had originated from Despair. Now that it was destroyed, his original feeling of invincibility was now replaced with terror. He trembled slightly and suddenly opened his palm. Streams of flames unfurled from his palm.

Surprise flashed across Frost's beautiful face, but she didn't make a move. Luo Lin's attack was easily parried by the armor that surrounded her body, not leaving a single mark. Once the smoke dissipated, Luo Lin had disappeared. He must have escaped to the depths of the Revered One's City.

"Now, we can kill Gawain!"

While Frost's words were very cool, it was like a death sentence the second the words flew out of her mouth. Queen Zi Shu leaped onto the city walls and raised her long sword, challenging Gawain to a fight. While Gawain was a strong BOSS, he wasn't much stronger than Queen Zi Shu, much less when Frost joined the opposition. Clearly, Gawain had no choice but to die. With the fourteen Dragon Knights hovering over the sky, Gawain didn't even have a chance to escape.

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I raised my long sword and continued the charge against the mobs of monsters. This battle must be the last opportunity we have to gain achievement points, right? There was no way I was going to let this slip away.... As for Gawain, I'll join in when he's at the end of his health bar. Right now, Gawain still had the strength to kill us.

Qing Qian sat on the side of the wall with monster corpses all around her. It looked almost as though she was getting a little tired. After wiping away some of the sweat on her forehead, she smiled at me, "Brother Xiao Yao, I just received some news that the Eighth Hybrid Demon King, "Demon Frost Emperor" is leading a mob of Ice Ram Corps in an invasion on the Western Shores of the Sea of No Return. Looks like they're

planning on crossing the sea to attack the American Server's main city—Iron Skull City!”

I replied, “Demon Frost Emperor? I didn't see it in our research before. That must be another server's BOSS, right?”

“Something like that....” Qing Qian giggled, “This Demon Frost Emperor even brought a country weapon from the American Server. Killing him leaves a 100% chance of dropping it. All that's left is to see if there's someone in the American Server who has the ability to kill this Demon Frost Emperor.”

I was stunned, “With the combined forces of an entire country, killing a single BOSS should be an easy task. Just what kind of country weapon does that Demon Frost Emperor have?”

Dong Cheng Yue chimed in, “It's a weapon all us mage players dream of owning. It's a country weapon tier staff called, ‘Staff of the Ice Queen - Aisha's Staff.’ Without a doubt, this staff will eventually become a pain for our Chinese Server!”

“Aisha's Staff?”

I smiled, “No worries, if we get the opportunity, we can poach the weapon from them. Aisha's Staff, it will one day belong to our Dong Cheng!”

Dong Cheng giggled, “Well well, my dearest Brother Xiao Yao has finally resorted to using country weapons to pick up girls? Alright, if you give me Aisha's Staff, then I'll agree to live with you for a month.”

I broke into a grin, “Alright alright, focus on killing monsters and stop joking around.”

Dong Cheng left with a smile on her lips.

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Everything was proceeding smoothly. Even after Gawain cast several tornado skills, an entire section of the city wall had collapsed. His right arm had taken serious damage, and he could barely lift the Purple Wind

Sword. This once aloof Hybrid Demon King was now forced into an almost pitiable state of retreat.

“Grr!”

As her dragon roared, Qing Luo charged ahead. Her Dragon Sword was filled with energy as she cut deep into Gawain’s body. Gawain let out a howl and was thrown into the rubble with 35% of his health left.

“Can we go fight Gawain now?” Li Mu asked.

I nodded, “Let’s go. After that, we’ll enter the city!”

A crowd of [Zhan Long] players all charged up onto the city wall and began entering the inner city. In the distance, I could see a group of the Revered One’s warriors charging out to meet them. They must’ve been the inner city guards, similar to the palace troops. Most of them weren’t even Level 157, and they were all Tier 7 Hybrid Demons. Luo Lin stood behind the group of men with a new sword in hand as he roared, “Kill. Go and help Gawain! Messenger, call for the Sword Spirit Knights. Have those lazy bugs get the f*ck out here. If the Revered One’s City falls, they won’t have the chance to happily live out their lives anyways. Don’t forget, the last king of Tian Ling City died in their hands, do they really think that King Rob will show mercy?!”

“Kill!”

In the city, a group of players and knights had prepared their formations and were ready to meet the enemy. The Steel Blade Horsemen, the Azure Ox Corps, and the Ice Ram Cavalry were all gathered together. They immediately launched the final attack on the Revered One’s Troops. I was among them and activated my [Frost Wing]s as support. With my swords in hand, I cut into the mob. One after another, I dealt deathly blows, steadily increasing my achievement points.

Under the protection of Enchanted Painting, Fang Ge Gue led an attack to flank the enemy. This was perhaps the greatest weakness of mages. They couldn’t fight on the frontlines and needed to be protected by other players in order to launch their spells. As such, even though Fang Ge Que’s damage far exceeded my own, he was no match for the number of

monsters that I already killed.

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“Boom!”

Several Greedy Wolf Raiders burst out of a nearby blacksmith shop. Call Me Master raised her spear and leaped out of the group. She wiped away some blood from the corner of her mouth, “D*mn, Gawain’s got a lot of strength....”

Soon after, another few Greedy Wolf Raiders flew through the air and crashed through the windows. “Peng!” The blacksmith store nearly split in two. Gawain roared in fury, “Did you ants think you could kill me? Dream on!”

Right as he said that, “Pa!” an arrow buried itself in his forehead. Dancing Forest had her longbow in hand and gasped, “Did I just make a big mistake?”

“What do you think?”

I was utterly speechless, “Steel Blade Horsemen, prepare your formations and charge!”

As I expected, we had completely provoked Gawain’s fury. Wind surrounded Gawain’s Purple Wind Sword. He swept his blade out and threw a dozen of the Steel Blade Horsemen into the air. One of them was even instantly killed. The rest were left in critical condition. I immediately flew forward and shouted, “Heal me!”

My Zhen Yue Blade met the Purple Wind Sword head on. The force of the impact made me retreat a few steps. Under my control, my Dragon Reservoir Sword flew into the air with a [Blade Spin], dealing several blows to Gawain. He returned the favor, but each time he threw a slash, he couldn’t kill me. All the healers in the area were supporting me after all. This Demon King Tier BOSS soon came to the realization that he couldn’t kill me. Rather, all of the [Zhan Long] players were currently whittling away his health. He had no choice but to turn tail and run. His health was now under 10%.

I followed close behind and smiled, “Like this, Gawain will be [Zhan Long]’s!”

Unfortunately, there were just too many unpredictable variables in a battle. Two other groups suddenly joined the fray. One was [Vanguard]’s cavalry, personally lead by Jian Feng Han, while the other was the [Legend]’s Azure Ox Corps, lead by Xuan Yuan Feng. The three troops surrounded the plaza. Looks like this is Gawain’s final resting place.

Another chaotic battle. My heart sunk; there was a chance that Gawain wouldn’t fall to [Zhan Long].

There were just too many ways this battle could end.

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“You d*mn*d ants, don’t you even dare to think of killing me. That will never happen, not even in a million years!”

Gawain charged out of the crowd of people, his armor covered in blood. There were some from the players, and some of his own. Little by little, his health was falling, and in the blink of an eye, it was already down to 5%. However, with three great player guilds attacking all at once, even when we kill him, we wouldn’t be able to tell which guild killed the boss. This situation was just too nerve-racking.

Li Mu roared, “Xiao Yao, I’ll take the Valiant Bravery Camp to force the Azure Ox Corps away, how does that sound? Enchanted Painting isn’t here, and Xuan Yuan isn’t nearly up to par to hold us off.”

I looked into the distance and shook my head, “No, let’s not initiate any attacks on [Legend]. It doesn’t look as though they plan on moving against us. Let’s not open that box.”

“Alright!”

Right then, Gawain let out a howl and flew into the sky. Powerful winds surrounded his body. This b*st*rd is planning on activating a final resort! He roared, “If I’m destined to die, then why don’t we all die together? Adventurers of Tian Ling City, the Royal Army, Theodore and his d*mn*d Flame Dragon Army, I’m taking all of you down with me, then my life will

have been worth it!”

The air around us seemed to suddenly grow heavy. “Hong!” The blacksmith store was completely crushed by the wind. An enormous black cyclone grew out of the rubble. Swords and battle-axes were wrapped into the storm, turning to sharp projectiles. I was stupefied, and I felt my heart grow cold. What terrifying destructive power. He really is the son of the storm!

In the city, numerous cyclones sprung up. Not far from us, one of the cyclones appeared in the middle of the Flame Dragon troops. It instantly killed over a thousand men and immediately turned them into mush. There wasn’t even time for the men to cry out. Gawain’s attack was just too OP. He was planning on sacrificing this Revered One’s City to deal this one critical blow!

Luo Lin gripped his palms and roared, “Gawain, have you gone insane? You’re actually activating this curse in my city? You d*mn b*st*ard!”

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Gawain paid no heed to Luo Lin’s words. As before, he continued calling the storms into the city. Just in the area that was surrounding him, there were several tornadoes with blade-like winds. A group of Steel Blade Horsemen and Azure Ox cavalymen who participated in the charge were instantly killed. This must be a Hybrid Demon tier BOSS’ real power, right? It completely dominated the players’ levels and defenses.

Right then, a shadow flashed across the sky. I could barely track the movement because it was so fast. It even surpassed the speed of the tornado!

In that moment, the air seemed to freeze. “Ka Cha!” Gawain’s howl was cut short and the tornados around him dissipated.

“Pa pa...”

Fresh blood dripped on the ground and Gawain’s head was cut off. The one carrying the sword was none other than a young woman dressed in all black. Her figure did not lose to Wan Er’s at all. When she removed the

mask, she revealed a beautiful face. With the Purple Wind Sword in hand, she smiled, “He he, the Purple Wind Sword is finally mine!”

I was startled, my eyes widening, “Odelia....”

Odelia looked over at me and said, “Well well, if it isn’t you. It’s been a while, do you miss me yet?”

.....

All of the players were speechless.

Chapter 825: Dragon Calamity

“Pa ta....”

I was utterly shaken up. So much that my Zhen Yue Blade clattered to the ground. What the f*ck happened? Odelia killed Gawain in the end. He didn't even drop a single hair. In the end, Odelia snatched away the Purple Wind Sword. It was as if all of our schemes and plans to get ahead of the other players were all for naught! However, in retrospect, once Gawain activated his curse, if Odelia hadn't killed him, then the entire player camp might have been decimated. It seems like it wasn't wrong for Odelia to have killed him. We underestimated the strength of this Seventh Hybrid Demon King too much.

I quickly bent over to pick up my Zhen Yue Blade and looked over at Odelia, “I haven't seen you back in Dragon City for months now, so why is it that you decided to appear here?”

Odelia pointed to the Purple Wind Sword and caressed the engravings on the blade with a smile, “I've been getting experience all over the place. What else would I be doing? Hm...these past few months, I went to the Sea of No Return, then I went to the Wild Giant Tribe Plains and the Dark Elf Territory. There were a few times where I wasn't sure if I'd make it back or not. Afterwards, I went and made a bargain with the emperor of the Swamps and sold an iron spear that's supposedly a god-tier weapon. All the money I got from that, I put into my gold bank!”

“Gold bank?”

I was startled, “What's a gold bank?”

Odelia giggled and threw the Purple Wind Sword into the sheath on her back. She crossed her arms over her chest, pushing up her full upper body, and smiled, “A gold bank is an organization that is founded on gold. Its main purpose is to travel the world and help the poor. Well, has my position in your heart just grown bigger?”

I pursed my lips, “Alright already, you think gold is more important than life. How does someone like you freely give that out to help people that are

suffering? Try that on someone else.”

Odelia grinned, “Alright alright, looks like I can’t pull this one over you. It’s actually a fraud. Our actual goal is to get rid of cavities and diarrhea...”

I couldn’t keep up with this conversation. I sprinted forward to examine Gawain’s body. Besides the Purple Wind Sword, he didn’t drop anything else. I couldn’t help but feel a little disappointed. I turned around to face the group of [Zhan Long] and Royal Army people and said, “Alright, time to advance into the city and kill Luo Lin. Once we take the city, our mission will be over!”

Li Mu nodded and turned around to lead a group of Steel Blade Horsemen ahead.

Han Yuan and Xiao Lie all made a headcount of the Royal Army numbers before ordering the injured soldiers to go back to camp to recover. The supply wagons and reinforcements had just reached the Revered One’s City. Numerous military doctors had come along with the troop. Like this, we could save the lives of the injured soldiers, which was one of the matters that was plaguing my mind. For this expedition into Luo Lin’s territory, while it did end in victory, my main objective was to minimize my losses. Otherwise, our army would end up like Theodore’s Flame Dragon Army.

Thankfully, from the start of this expedition, the Royal Army’s losses did not exceed ten thousand. On the other hand, due to Theodore’s cruel tactics, while 150,000 came, only 90,000 were left in the Flame Dragon Army. Even though this last expedition ended in victory, the Flame Dragon Army probably lost its reputation as the number one army in Tian Ling City. Yet they won this bitter victory. King Rob will probably bestow a great award to the army. He might even incorporate another army into the Flame Dragon Army. Anything was possible. My only wish is that it won’t be the Royal Army. If it really happens, I definitely wouldn’t accept the order. Worse comes to worst, I’ll just rebel against the empire. This army was brought up entirely by me—I would never allow them to become some other person’s sacrificial offering.

.....

Small skirmishes were rising up all over the city. Frost and Qing Luo led a group of Dragon City soldiers into the city and were now clashing against Luo Lin's Imperial Guard. At first glance, it was difficult to differentiate the two sides.

I summoned my Flying Scythe Horse and galloped to the front lines of the Royal Army. While [Frost Wing]s provided me with the best support, it was too conspicuous. I would rather keep a low profile.

Han Yuan's long blade was filled with knicks and dents. Who knows how many Hybrid Demons he's killed in this last battle. His face was covered in black blood. Without a care, he just wiped it off with his sleeve and continued fighting. When he saw me, he smiled, "General, looks like we've won! The empire's cannons are truly powerful. It's just like you predicted, Luo Lin and Gawain's armies took enormous damage under the might of those machines!"

I nodded, "Don't get arrogant. Let's focus on quick attacks so this battle won't drag on. Any one of the Demon Kings like Lanais, Xi Fu, Da Lun, or Ignaus could appear at any moment. Once they do, our remaining forces will not be able to stand against them."

"Yes sir!"

Han Yuan swung his blade and roared, "Advance! We'll break through the city gates in the next ten minutes. Once we break into the city, search every alley, every house and building for Luo Lin. Our mission is to bring this traitor of humanity's head back to Tian Ling City! Everyone, don't worry, as long as we kill Luo Lin, then our army should get promoted to the next tier and we'll get double the pay!"

Han Yuan wasn't wrong. Tian Ling City is typically very generous with their rewards for military achievements. If we really did kill Luo Lin, then everyone in the Royal Army would get a reward!

After Han Yuan's words, all the men were pumped up. Filled with energy, they charged at the gates, clashing with Luo Lin's Imperial Guard. There were casualties on both sides, and for every death from the Royal

Army, there were two deaths in the Imperial Guard. After Gawain died, the morale of Luo Lin's army was greatly fractured. If a Demon King could even be killed, how could these little soldiers stand up against us?

.....

Right as everyone was brimming with confidence, I heard the sound of dragon screeches. I couldn't help but stop in the middle of battle. I leapt off my Flying Scythe Horse and climbed up one of the archer towers. Looking into the dark clouds, all I could see were dark shadows. I felt my heart tighten, "Not good..."

Wan Er flew over to my side and asked, "What is it?"

"Their reinforcements are here!"

I looked into the distance and said, "Wan Er, tell the Dragon Steel Horsemen to create a defense formation and stop our advance on the city. The reinforcements are in the north, and if I'm not mistaken, they've come from the Wild Dragon Tribe Territory!"

"Alright!"

Wan Er lightly landed on the ground and concisely relayed her orders. All ten thousand of [Zhan Long]'s men retreated out of the city and created a defense formation in the streets. I then warned the Royal Army and the rest of the Tian Ling City players. Only [Judgement], [Enemies at the Gate], and [Heros Mound] retreated. The rest continued their attack on the city. Frost had noticed as well, and she took her Dragon City Knights to the border with the cannons. She lined up a few of the Dragon Crystal Cannons there.

After a few minutes, the thick clouds above us dissipated and dragon screeches resounded in the air. One of the flame dragons peaked out of the clouds and fiercely looked at the ground. It had an air of royalty. After slithering in the air, it suddenly opened its mouth and roared, "Lowly humans, you actually dare to commit such offense. Dragons, the time for our vengeance is here. Attack!"

As it said that, the enormous flame dragon dove at the ground and threw

a [Dragon Breath] at the armies. In just seconds, an entire crowd of Flame Dragon soldiers was burned to ashes. Another ice dragon flew out of the clouds, followed by a black dragon, and then another. Numerous dragons were appearing in the sky. There were at least a thousand in the sky!

Han Yuan raised his blade and looked into the sky. He gulped, "So.... so many dragons. We're done for, done for...."

The Wild Dragon Tribe must have all come out. Ignas had been hiding in the clouds!

My heart skipped a beat and I retreated backwards, "It's not like we can't kill the dragons. Archers, when the dragons dive down, that's when they're most vulnerable. Reach as high as you can. Use [Scatter Shot] to stun them. If the dragons fall to the ground, knights, that's when you take your chance to attack. Don't be afraid. It's already too late for us to run. At worst, we die!"

Li Mu, Wang Jian, and Old K all nodded. Dancing Forest, General Lian Po, and Run Like Flames all created separate teams. They climbed into the city wall, went up the towers, and leapt onto the highest point. All the towers had roofs, hiding the archers from sight. After a few seconds, one of the black dragons rushed at the Steel Blade Horsemen's formation and opened its enormous mouth. It stretched its long neck and began using [Dragon Breath].

"Shua!"

A sharp arrow flew out. It came from Dancing Forest. "Peng!" [Scatter Shot] was incredibly accurate and landed right in the flying black dragon's eye. Right then, the dragon choked and fell towards the ground. When it fell, it crushed a few Steel Blade Horsemen to death. Li Mu and Wang Jian immediately led their troops forward and surrounded the dragon. It was a Demon Harvest Tier BOSS, Level 156. We could still kill it.

In the other direction, Run Like Flames attracted another Flame Dragon over. General Lian Po dealt a meticulous shot, dropping the dragon near Matcha and Meng Yao's team. After surrounding it, [Zhan Long] killed another one.

Despite these victories, there were still countless massive dragons hovering over the city and killing our team members like bugs. In this turn of events, the tables were turned and the Demons were crushing the Royal and the Flame Dragon armies.

.....

“Crossbow Carts!”

Long Xing raised his spear and roared orders. The Royal Army’s crossbow carts turned directions and were pointed at the sky. “Pa pa pa!” Iron arrows flew out of the carts. While the accuracy was low, the crossbow carts released masses of arrows, dropping the dragons to the ground one after another. A group of knights would then charge ahead and bring them down.

“Pa!”

A blue force suddenly cut across the field. Frost was no longer in her original position. She flew into the air and dealt several sword slashes. Three dragons howled and fell to the ground. Frost was a superior god, and killing dragons was like cutting vegetables.

On the city wall, the Queen Zi Shu sat on a ledge with her legs crossed. She finally had to act. Scales began to appear on her face and she shouted, “You b*st*rds, you actually dare to act so wild! Grrr!”

She roared and her armor split apart, revealing the scaly skin underneath. Her body was growing incredibly fast and she revealed her original form. Red Dragon Queen Zi Shu suddenly charged into the clouds and killed off the dragons one after another. Each hit was incredibly heavy. Looks like Zi Shu also knew that this was a life or death moment.

Chapter 826: Dragon Calamity Pt. 2

“Dragon... Dragon Calamity....”

Shock was written all over Crown Prince Theodore’s face. His entire body was trembling and the Marshall’s Sword shook violently. He could barely even bring himself to look at the dragons in the sky. In a shaky voice he said, “The prophet’s words were real... the Dragon Calamity is here. A tribe of dragons will descend from the skies, upon the earth where no light can reach. That marks the beginning for which the empire’s fate will come to an end. We’re done for... the Tian Ling Empire is really done for. The Dragon Calamity is real....”

One of the majors walked up to him and roared, “Your Highness, come to reason. You’re the marshall of three great armies. All of the soldiers are awaiting your orders. Are we going to battle, or will we retreat? What should we do?”

Theodore looked up at the mass of dragons and clenched his teeth before muttering, “How are we supposed to fight? Have we not lost enough people? Retreat. All men retreat. We aren’t on par with the Hybrid Demons. Give up. Save a few lives. Think of it as a favor given by the empire to the military. Retreat....”

The major was stunned, “Two of the armies are too far into the battle. Are we really retreating?”

Theodore suddenly pulled out his Marshall’s Sword and roared, “I am the marshall of the three armies. I am the crown prince, heir to the throne, my words are military orders. Are you questioning my authority?”

The major’s jaw dropped and he immediately knelt to the ground with his head bowed, “I was wrong Your Highness, please forgive your general! Your Highness, I ask for your forgiveness, I’ll immediately send the order for a retreat!”

The Flame Dragon Army was completely emasculated now and had no will to fight. The Royal Army on the other hand was full of courage and willpower. With the Flame Dragon Cannons and the Dragon Crystal

Cannons aimed at the dragons in the sky, along with the assistance from the player groups, we overpowered the dragons one by one. Soon, over half of the thousand dragons were forced to the ground. Any close combat with them resulted in casualties. The city had at least 200,000 players left in battle. With a thousand people killing each dragon, that would already take care of 200 of them. The only issue was... that calculation was only in theory. The reality was that the player numbers were dropping at an incredibly fast rate!

“Charge with me!”

On the ground, a group of Hybrid Demons charged out. Luo Lin raised his blade and personally led the charge. The Imperial Guard quickly broke through our first lines of defense. In the next moment, Luo Lin’s army had reached the frontlines of the Flame Dragon Army. All of the nearby soldiers stood their ground. One of them roared, “Luo Lin, you traitor, die!”

Luo Lin coldly smiled and flames began to rise from his palm. Suddenly, he dashed forward and swept past the enemy. A sea of fire swallowed up the soldiers. The gap in their strengths was just too great!

A few of the soldiers immediately ran away and shouted, “Oh no, Luo Lin is advancing against our central army!”

Theodore looked up and leaped onto his horse. With his Marshall’s Sword raised, he rushed out of the central army and shouted, “Do not panic! Left and right flanks, draw close to the central army. Horsemen, hold off the enemy. Archers, do not let up on your attacks. Kill!”

As he said that, Theodore suddenly looked into the distance and shouted, “Where’s the Royal Army? Why haven’t they come to protect their marshall?”

Unfortunately, there were a dozen dragons raging in the center of the Royal Army lines. How would we have the time to provide support? Even so, I looked over to Xia Ye and said, “Take a division of troops to reinforce the Flame Dragon Army. Hurry, we can’t expose Theodore to any danger or else our Royal Army will be done for!”

Xia Ye understood the deeper meaning behind my words and gave a

strong nod, “Yes sir!”

Before Xia Ye’s troop even arrived, Luo Lin’s army had already broken through the front lines of the human army. In one-on-one fights, the Hybrid Demon soldiers’ battle power far exceeded that of the Flame Dragon Army soldiers. The two sides were interlocked in an intense battle. Without the cover from the cannons, the Flame Dragon Army’s weakness was exposed and Luo Lin heavily exploited this fact.

“Boom!”

Flames unfurled in the crowd of humans and Luo Lin threaded his way through the human army. With a single punch, he dealt a powerful blow that turned the people into mush. He then spun around and threw a slash, cutting down a major.

“You b*st*rd!”

Theodore growled and swung his Marshall’s Sword. Luo Lin cackled and dashed forward. “Peng!” He punched the sword’s hilt, sending it straight back into its sheath. At the same time, he raised his boot and landed a kick right in Theodore’s abdomen. Theodore was just a spoiled young prince. His battle power was barely comparable with the Royal Army’s Han Yuan or Xiao Lie, how could he possibly stand up against this Hybrid Demon King tier attack? After retreating several steps, he vomited blood.

Luo Lin suddenly grabbed the Marshall’s Sword from Theodore’s hand and picked Theodore up by his neck to lift him up, “Is this the crown prince of Tian Ling City? Looks like you’re not even on par with the prince of Ba Huang City?”

Theodore roared, “Luo Lin, mar me or kill me, what’s the point of this humiliation?”

“Alright!”

Luo Lin smiled and pulled the Marshall’s Sword out with a “Keng!” All of the NPCs from Tian Ling City stopped dead in their tracks. A bloody head flew into the air and rolled along the ground.

Theodore died in battle!

My heart froze. Luo Lin had killed the marshall of our three armies with the Marshall's Sword. The ridicule was too much!

“Shua!”

I leapt to my feet, sending away my Flying Scythe Horse. I cast [Frost Wing]s and rushed right at Luo Lin with my Zhen Yue Blade in hand. I shouted, “Odelia, help me out!”

I moved like lightning and rammed into Luo Lin's back. “Peng!” Sparks flew from the impact of our armor. Even though I had used all my strength, Luo Lin didn't even stumble. He walked forward a few steps and turned to look at me with a cold smile on his lips, “You little b*st*rd, if it wasn't for you, would Frost have left my side? You will die today!”

I growled, “Frost left you because of your own actions. Take a step back, did you really think that human trash like you was worthy of Frost's loyalty?!”

As I said that, I pulled out my blade and angrily threw a slash. In that moment, ten slashes flew out. Luo Lin's flame shield blocked my combo. Unfortunately, my attack power wasn't enough to break through his Flame Shield. After all, he did have his status as a Hybrid Demon King tier along with its power-ups.

“Die!”

Luo Lin roared and stabbed the Marshall's Sword at me.

I raised my Zhen Yue Blade to parry the blow. Sparks flew in front of my eyes. The Marshall's Sword was just too strong. That one blow pushed away the Zhen Yue Blade and cut into my shoulder!

“37,181!”

I only received that much damage? I felt my confidence strengthen. Luo Lin was only strong in the past because of Despair. Without it, he was a toothless tiger. How could he handle me?

“Shua!”

“+23,275!”

With one [Cleansing Rain], I recovered quite a bit of my health. Darling Duck and some other healers were getting close to us, thus giving me another boost. Maybe there was still some hope in this solo duel with Luo Lin!

After casting my support skills like [Wall of Dou Qi] and [Frost Armor], Luo Lin and I exchanged a dozen blows. Finally, I managed to break through his Flame Shield. Right then, Odelia burst through the crowd of people with the Purple Wind Sword in hand. She pulled out the blade and hacked at Luo Lin's right arm.

"Eh!?"

Luo Lin immediately pulled his arm back, but it was too late. Odelia's blade rammed against the Marshall's Sword. At the same time, she used her sheath to trap Luo Lin's wrist. With a strong tug, she pulled the Marshall's Sword out of Luo Lin's hand.

"B*tch!"

Luo Lin roared and threw a punch. Odelia immediately raised her arm to defend and was thrown back a dozen meters. Strands of her hair fell out of place and it looked like she had taken some light damage. Yet she smiled and threw the Marshall's Sword at me, "Take it!"

I dashed forward and grabbed the hilt of the Marshall's Sword. With one glance at the stats, it told me that it had no attack power and was just a prop. However, it did symbolize the authority over the three armies. I faced the collapsed Flame Dragon Army and flew into the air. With the Marshall's Sword raised high above my head, I shouted, "The Marshall's Sword is in my hand now. Flame Dragon Army, hear my command. Defend your positions. Point the crossbow carts and the flame cannons at the sky and blast those d*mn*d dragons out of the sky. Archers, use your chain arrows and drag them out of the sky. You are military men of the empire. Defending the country against enemies with your lives is your mission, so fight! All officers, take out your swords. Kill any deserters!"

All the old noblemen NPCs of Tian Ling City called me a merciful general, but I had never once felt that way. If pressured, I would use any

means possible, especially against an army with all bark and no bite like the Flame Dragon Army. The Royal Army had yet to retreat and was dying on the front lines while the Flame Dragon Army fell first. It was truly a joke.

Clustered arrows flew out into the sky. Luo Lin even took one in the shoulder. He turned to run. He wasn't an idiot. He wouldn't fight with his life like Gawain did. Besides, now that he lost Despair, his strength had greatly decreased. He actually wasn't much stronger than a high-level Demon Harvest tier BOSS. Besides, he was down to 40% health right now. As long as we held off the pressure from the Wild Dragon Tribe, killing Luo Lin wouldn't be an issue.

In the sky, dragon blood fell like rain. Ignaus had appeared and was battling Frost. Furthermore, three of the Dragon Tribe Elders were supporting Ignaus. Otherwise, he would've taken damage long ago. Queen Zi Shu roared in the sky and I could see patches of missing scales. This seemed to only add oil to her anger. She spat out ribbons of crimson flames. This was a type of Dragon Flame that none of the other dragons could defend against. In the end, the one who killed the most number of dragons was herself, who was also a dragon.

On the ground, the players from different guilds continued their fierce fights, killing the dragons one after another. Even the players were dying in droves, and there were fewer and fewer of them. In the blink of an eye, only 100,000 players were left and we had killed half of the dragons. Ignaus roared in frustration and desperation; he finally realized that if he continued this fight, they would all be annihilated.

“Grrrrr.....”

At the heed of Ignaus' roar, the dragons all turned and flew into the cover of the clouds. Frost and Zi Shu charged after them. Frost's shoulder was bloodied, but it was nothing critical. Even so, the two of them weren't going to let Ignaus retreat like this. At the same time however, she noticed another person and her aggression instantly grew, “Luo Lin....”

“Keng!”

She slid her Severing Beauty Sword out of its sheath and dove for the ground. “Peng.” Her sword split the earth. At that moment, Luo Lin had been leading a group of royal guards towards the northern gate of the city to escape. That strike threw Luo Lin back a dozen steps. Despair filled his face. He looked up at Frost and roared, “Frost, do you really want me dead that much?”

Frost pursed her lips and said, “The living man is already dead, so what use is there in keeping a dead man alive.”

Chapter 827: A Predictable Ending

“Kill!”

A group of people were coming in to steal the Boss. It was the players from Run Like Fire. Rumor raised his sword and shouted, “Luo Lin only has 11% of his health left. Charge! Kill him for honor and for the glory of the empire!”

I couldn't help but smile at the irony. He's really here for the equipment.

The Run Like Fire players charged at Luo Lin, but never in a million years would they have imagined that this old fogey would take so much effort to kill. [Hero's Mound] and [Prague] players fought beside them, sealing Luo Lin's fate. With that many people aiming for his head, not killing him would be difficult.

.....

I looked up and saw that the thick clouds that hovered over our battle were finally dissipating. We had won this war, truly won it. After killing Gawain, dealing a critical blow to Ignaus, and finally killing Luo Lin, we finally achieved our long-awaited victory. The only issue was... I glanced over at Theodore's cold corpse and felt my heart stutter. Theodore and I had set out on this battle together and we were the two great commanders of this expedition. Now that Theodore died in battle, would I really be in the clear?

That seems very unlikely. Who knows what the empire will do to me this time when I go back.

Right then, Li Mu and Wang Jian led a group of [Zhan Long] players and came to provide assistance. In the blink of an eye, Luo Lin's health fell under 5%. It looked as though everyone had come to punish the criminal, but reality was, they just wanted to wait for Luo Lin to drop his equipment. Though Despair was gone now, he still should have some good items left on him.

Unfortunately, Luo Lin was now surrounded by a sea of players from

every guild. Most of them came from [Hero's Mound], [Legend], and [Prague]. Uncle Yan Zhao clearly looked like he was determined to get this drop. He raised his sword and shouted, "Yaya, we must be the ones to kill Luo Lin!"

Six Ya led a charge against Luo Lin, only to be pushed back with critical health. Annoyed, she said, "Did you think that a three-headed monster like Luo Lin could be killed so easily?"

Goodbye Tears raised his staff and forced his way to Luo Lin's side, "D*mn, why am I always the butt of the joke!"

Luo Lin turned around and dealt a sweeping attack, sending Goodbye Tears flying. Half of his face was covered in a burnt patch of skin. Don't Be Foolish raised his shield and rushed forward, shouting, "Monk, stand still and recover some health. Leave Luo Lin to me!"

Luo Lin was now standing within a shield of fire. He stepped back and rammed right into Don't Be Foolish with a fist. "PA!" He shattered Don't Be Foolish's shield and reached for his neck, "Bug, why don't I take you on a trip to Heaven!"

"Shua!"

Luo Lin was a god-tier BOSS and he rushed into the sky. Even though he had critical health, his blows were still incredibly sharp. Don't Be Foolish's face was completely green, "Motherf*cking Luo Lin, you better let go of me. I'm not some f*cking girl, what are you planning!"

In the sky, Qing Luo and the Queen Zi Shu flew over to stop Luo Lin's ascent. Qing Luo dealt one slash, accelerating the drop in Luo Lin's health. Don't Be Foolish was even more terrified now. Part of his armor had been chipped in that slash, and some blood even flowed out. He blinked away some tears, "Doesn't this NPC wench know how to treat a delicate flower like me?"

Luo Lin howled in pain and couldn't keep his grip on Don't Be Foolish. In the end, Don't Be Foolish fell to the ground with 20% health left. As he fell, he shouted, "Brothers, catch me!"

Goodbye Tears dashed forward with his arms out to catch Don't Be Foolish. He ran a few steps too far and "PA!" Don't Be Foolish fell headfirst, hitting the ground. The impact was enough to kill him. Goodbye Tears stiffened and was full of regret, "Brother, I miscalculated..."

On the other hand, Luo Lin landed in a group of players. It was the [Thousand Mound] Greedy Wolf Raiders and the [Hero's Mound] Flame Crystal Knights. After a few seconds, a bell rang in the sky—

'Ding!'

System Notification: Congratulations to [Q-Sword] for killing the Hybrid Demon King [The Revered One Luo Lin], you have received the following rewards: Level +2, Charm+100, and your reputation in the city has greatly increased: Achievement+300!

.....

Who would've thought that the person to kill Luo Lin in the end would be Q-Sword? The battle was just too chaotic. [Zhan Long] arrived first, and even the guilds who were right next to Luo Lin like [Prague], [Judgement], and [Legend], didn't end up with the kill.

Either way, this battle was now truly over. The players fought fiercely to kill off the last of the Revered One's Warriors. Now that Luo Lin was dead, the Revered One's Empire fell with him. This was no longer the Hybrid Demon territory, but rather a desolate city.

After many inquiries, we managed to find out that after Q-Sword killed Luo Lin, he dropped a Deity Tier Mage necklace which was given to one of the mage girls in his guild. The other equipment he dropped was a Demon Harvest Tier shield, and that was given to the number one knight in [Hero's Mound]—Glasses. Finally, there was a Demon Harvest battleaxe that was up for a ROLL and taken by Jian Tan. In the end, the final victor of this battle was [Hero's Mound].

Once the dust settled, the city was wrapped in a deadly silence. Corpses littered the grounds. There were quite a few Flame Dragon Army soldiers who were holding back their sobs. The players started heading back to the main city to receive their rewards. In the blink of an eye, the Revered

One's City was now practically a dead city. Only a few players were left along with the Royal Army, the Dragon City Army, and the Flame Dragon Army NPC soldiers.

The Flame Dragon Army had sent out 150,000 men this time and 15 generals. 14 of those died and only one was left. Not to mention, he severe leg injuries. The man himself was truly a brave fellow. Despite his injury, he still limped over and cut off Luo Lin's head. He knelt to the ground and cried out, "Your Highness, do you see? We've killed Luo Lin, we've avenged your death! I hope that your spirit may rest in peace!"

I silently stood on the sidelines and watched. Theodore came here with the dreams of bringing victory back to solidify his position as the heir to the crown. Unfortunately, he never imagined that the Hybrid Demon Army would reserve so much strength. The 150,000 man Flame Dragon Army was so majestic when it first came, and now there were less than 30,000 men left. Even their commander was personally killed by Luo Lin. Theodore had gravely miscalculated and now all that was left for him to do was watch over us from his grave.

I looked at the Marshall's Sword in my hand and suddenly felt awkward. I walked over and laid the sword by the major's side and said, "General Yu, this is the Marshall's Sword that His Highness left behind. Please hold onto it and bring it back home along with His Highness' remains!"

The general nodded and looked at me. That's when he saw all of the injuries I had taken. My Violet Heaven Cape was completely dyed red with blood, and it had multiple holes in it. He couldn't help but sigh, "General Li, Thank you... you... you've fought hard..."

I gave a curt nod.

The four generals, Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, and Xia Ye had all taken small injuries, but they didn't receive anything that was too heavy. After this battle, they gained enough experience to level up again. That fact alone was enough to cheer me up. Han Yuan addressed me, "Lord Commander, how should we deal with this abandoned city?"

I thought for a moment and said, "We'll bury the brothers who died in

battle right here. Afterwards, we'll burn Luo Lin's palace and turn this city into ruins. There's no need to leave any guards posted here. Even if we did, there's no way they would be able to hold this city. We were extremely lucky that Lanais, Da Lun, and Xi Fu hadn't appeared, or else we never would've been able to make it back alive."

"Yes, sir!"

.....

Han Yuan ordered the remaining able soldiers to dig graves for the fallen Royal Army and Flame Dragon soldiers. There were 90,000 graves throughout the battlefield. So that the bodies wouldn't be revived as undead soldiers, we gathered them in one pile and created a bonfire. Nine fierce fire pits burned before us. All of the living soldiers knelt on one knee before them to show their respect and kinship. The Royal Army and Flame Dragon Army began to hum and then sing a sorrowful eulogy for their fallen brothers—

Tian Ling bright and glistening, warriors brave and fierce.

I swear my life and loyalty, no matter where I am buried.

Tian Ling bright and glistening, warriors brave and fierce.

Dressed in shining armor, our spirits bound to our country.

.....

Men in the military are fated to die in foreign and strange lands, and that is something we all understood.

Not long after, smoke began to rise above the palace as it caught fire. The blazing flames lit up the city and its surroundings. The Royal and the Flame Dragon Armies were finally done sweeping the city.

On the way back, we continuously made stops to burn our dead soldiers and create graves for them. It took three hours for us to reach Tian Ling City. This time, Frost brought Zi Shu and Odelia along to return to the capital. Frost was smart, and it seems like she knows something is up.

Tian Ling City, a majestic fortress located on the northeastern lands of

the continent. It symbolized a wall that protected humanity from the dangers of the north.

As we approached the great northern gates, we could see a crowd of officials wearing mourning clothes. Looks like news of Theodore's death had arrived long before we did. King Rob, Owen, and Pearl were all dressed in white, standing at the front of the crowd. All of their eyes were red from tears and sorrow. They were here to receive Theodore's remains.

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The cart carrying the coffin was carefully pushed into the city. King Rob was trembling. In a fit of anguish, he rushed to Theodore's body and wept over his still son. When he saw that Theodore's head was separated from his body, he sobbed even harder. Never would he have imagined that he would never see Theodore again. Nor would he have imagined that the number one commander in the empire would end up with a headless doom.

Owen was also sobbing against the coffin, but from what I could see, his tears were fake. He was likely hiding his delight at his brother's demise.

I led the Royal Army's officers in line and said nothing.

After ten minutes passed, second prince Owen suddenly turned around and shouted, "Where is the Commander of the Royal Army Li Xiao Yao?"

I gave a curt nod, "Here."

"Kneel!" Owen angrily shouted.

I calmly stepped forward and replied, "Why?"

"Why?"

Tears streaked down Owen's face and he shouted, "You left on the expedition with my brother. Now he's dead, and yet you came back without a single injury. Do you now know what your crime is? Don't think I don't know what you're planning. I received intel long ago that you've always secretly hated my brother's methods. You tried to take vengeance through this campaign and didn't save my brother in battle. Isn't that

right!?”

As he said that, Owen shouted, “Guards, take Li Xiao Yao’s badge away, he is no longer a ranking officer and is to be executed immediately!”

Chapter 828: Imprisonment

Two royal guards unsheathed their swords and approached me. Right then, Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and the other generals rose up in protest. Han Yuan stepped out with his blade in hand and stood right in front of me. He shouted, “Nobody touches our general!”

Xiao Lie slid off his horse and shouted, “Royal Army, mount!”

All of the Royal Army knights donned their helmets and rushed onto their horses, pulling out their blades in one sweep. It was the precursor of a great battle. After the long expedition, the Royal Army had managed to maintain much of its battle power. There were at least 35,000 men who could still fight. These men had fought by my side against the Dragonling Army and the Revered One’s Demon soldiers. My authority in the army was unmovable. It is exactly for this reason that they were willing to take this risk for me.

I remained calm in the face of all these men and walked over with my Zhen Yue Blade in hand, “Your Highness Owen, my Royal Army fought beside the Flame Dragon Army throughout the expedition. Close to half of the Hybrid Demon casualties came from the hands of my men. Just what proof do you have that I, Li Xiao Yao, stood by and watched as His Highness Theodore died in battle? Were you personally on the battlefield, watching over us? Otherwise, what proof do you have to say that I took this opportunity for personal motives?”

Pearl piped up, “That’s right brother. If you don’t have proof, perhaps you shouldn’t judge Li Xiao Yao to be guilty so soon?”

Owen roared, “Sister, the one who died is our blood brother, how could you be so cold? You’re actually speaking on behalf of Li Xiao Yao. Do you not feel any guilt towards Theodore as you stand there?!”

Pearl immediately turned around and knelt before King Rob and sobbed, “Father, this battle has already broken so much, but in the end we were able to kill Luo Lin and Gawain. As a result, we destroyed the Revered One’s Empire. How could we execute the people who contributed to this

victorious return? This would completely chill the hearts of our soldiers. Father, say something...”

The old king gripped Theodore’s icy hands and murmured, “Theodore, my child... now that you’re gone, who will I leave this empire to?”

Grief had completely overtaken the old king’s thoughts, stealing the old king’s consciousness. Owen’s anger was sharp and fierce as he roared, “Men, take Li Xiao Yao away for execution!”

A group of Royal Guards charged forward. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie of the Royal Army stepped forward and assumed a battle pose. Even Long Xing and Xia Ye came running to defend me. The situation was quickly evolving and it looked like the two sides were ready to break into a battle. The Royal Guards were barely a force to reckon, not to mention the fact that the Flame Dragon Army wouldn’t necessarily help them. Perhaps for a short while, the Royal Army would have the chance to control Tian Ling City. The only problem was that if Owen decided to use his Xia Yu Army and take back the city, then we wouldn’t necessarily be able to hold it. All the city would amount to would be a hot potato.

Owen’s temper continued to rise. Seeing the group of Royal Army officials step up, he shouted, “Xia Ye, have you forgotten where your loyalties truly belong? You actually dare to stand against me? Are you planning on betraying the country?!”

At this point, Xia Ye had lost all patience and quietly replied, “Your Highness, all I know is that our commander has taken many wounds for the sake of this country. Never has he shown an ounce of selfishness. If you decide to execute him today, then you will commit a grave injustice to this world. I, Xia Ye, have taken the empire’s food and am paid by the empire’s wages. I will naturally remain loyal to the empire. But killing such a highly acclaimed general such as Commander Li is something I will never be able to conform to.”

“Useless trash!”

Owen roared angrily, “You traitorous dogs, what other majors are there from the Flame Dragon Army? Xu Yi, did you not know that Li Xiao Yao

watched as my royal brother died? You are now the highest ranked commander in the Flame Dragon Army. Order your men to attack the Royal Army and kill these traitorous troops!"

Xu Yi slowly stepped forward from within the crowd of men, his eyes red with tears and his voice solemn, "Your Highness, Luo Lin killed the crown prince. At the time, we were dealing with a dragon invasion. Tens of thousands of dragons were ambushing us. Commander Li was the one who led his Royal Army to hold them off. They could barely take care of themselves, how could they save his royal highness when he was a thousand meters away? Your Highness, please forgive me, but I cannot in good conscience follow through with this order!"

Owen grew angry. "Keng!" He pulled out his sword and walked straight towards me. Motherf*cker, does this trash want to kill me with his own hands? Does he not realize that I can revive myself after he kills me?

Han Yuan shouted, "Your Highness, I implore you, please do not be stubborn!"

As he said that, he pulled out his nicked blade. I could see his grip grow strong as he channeled energy into the blade. He leaped up and spun around in the air, throwing an incredibly strong slice at Owen. Owen was long prepared for this fight and quickly whipped out his blade, cutting into one of the dents. "Peng!" Dou Qi exploded into the air and Han Yuan's blade broke. The blade in Owen's hand was a treasured sword. While he had broken the long blade, Han Yuan's massive strength was enough to make Owen stumble back a few steps and crash into Theodore's coffin.

"Your Highness?"

Right then, Frost finally stepped out from the crowd. She stared intently at Theodore and then calmly said, "Li Xiao Yao is a citizen of Dragon City. If you want to kill him, don't you need my permission first? Furthermore, Dragon City has always fought alongside the Royal Army and the Flame Dragon Army. I watched His Highness' last moments. Does that mean that I also stood by and let him die? Second Prince Owen, you sit here on this high seat in Tian Ling City, but do you know the bitter suffering we went

through in our fight against Gawain, Luo Lin, and Ignaus, three of the Hybrid Demon Kings? Not to mention the immense pressure that we were under from the crowds of dragons raining down from the sky. Under such circumstances, how could anyone save anyone? If Your Highness plans to continue his obstinance, then Tian Ling City will not only gain the Royal Army as an enemy, but Dragon City as well. I imagine Ba Huang City will follow suit as well. I, Frost, have no qualms with using my life to act as a wall of protection for mankind, but I also would not mind to see a change in ownership in Tian Ling City. Queen Angela would be talented in both civil matters and military strategy. I am more than confident in her ability to fill those shoes.”

“Eh... you, Frost!”

Owen was seething with anger, yet he couldn't even get a sentence out. Frost's one sentence was by no means any less fearsome than the entire Royal Army. If Owen were to keep this up, then it wouldn't be as simple as the Royal Army's soldiers changing loyalties. Instead, it meant that the Dragon City Army, the Ba Huang City Army, and the Royal Army would group up to attack Tian Liang City. If that were to happen, the coup might even succeed. After all, no one here was more clear on just how strong or weak the remaining Tian Ling Armies really were.

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“That's enough, Owen....”

After a long silence, the old king finally turned around and spoke up with sorrow in his eyes, “Enough blood has been lost for this battle. Theodore sacrificed his body for his country, and is truly the pride of our royal family. As for whether or not Commander Li Xiao Yao has failed his duty, that is to be discussed at another time. Lady Frost, please do not be angry. Owen was only disrespectful because he was too overwhelmed with grief. I only ask that you understand. Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, and the other generals, return to your respective garrisons. After we bury Theodore, we will naturally discuss the rewards of the expedition. Take General Li to the dungeons below the palace. I will decide on his punishment in the future.”

Han Yuan raised his broken blade and shouted, "Your Majesty, we've only brought achievements and no failures back to Your Majesty. There is no reason for this kind of treatment!"

The old king shouted back, "Han Yuan, do you dare to rebel against a direct order from your king?"

Han Yuan clenched his teeth and stood his ground without another word. He just held his stubborn expression like a brash warrior. His display of fierce loyalty only made Owen, Louis, and Leis become even more annoyed. There is only love or hate for a fierce general like Han Yuan: Love for his loyalty, but hate for his pig-headed stubbornness.

I shook my head. Looks like this was the easiest path in the end. I smiled at the generals and said, "Han Yuan, Xiao Lie, Long Xing, Xia Ye, take the brothers back to our grounds to heal their wounds and rest. There were a lot of medicines we didn't have during the expedition. We shouldn't let our injured brothers die for nothing because of a disease. Hurry along, nothing will come to me in the palace."

Han Yuan protested, "General, even though I come from a poor family, I can at least understand the balance of hazy political battles. The Royal Army can go back to the fort, but I will personally lead 500 of our own guards to watch these gates, ensuring the general's safety at all times!"

Long Xing, Xia Ye, and the others all nodded in agreement, "We all are willing!"

Left without any other choices, I finally agreed, "Alright then. Deputy General Song will lead the men back!"

Deputy General Song nodded, "Yes, my Lord!"

Right then, two guards stepped up to me with their arms out, "General, if you would please make your way to the palace? In addition, please put away your weapons."

Without another word, I waved my hand and my Zhen Yue Blade and my Dragon Reservoir sword were returned to my bag. With my hands empty, I smiled, "Look, what weapons?"

The two guards stiffened. Wan Er took this chance to bound over to me with a grin, "Pig, even though I don't fully understand the context of what's happening here, nothing critical will happen, right?"

I smiled back reassuringly, "It's fine, I'll just sit in jail for a bit. Then I'll log off and grab some food with you."

"Ok!"

.....

Frost looked over at Queen Zhi Shu and Odelia and said, "How about we go to the restaurant outside the palace? I want to personally watch and see what they plan on doing with Li Xiao Yao."

Zhi Shu smiled and said, "Alright, I was just thinking the same thing!"

Odelia played around with her new Purple Wind Sword and said, "How about I hang back too? Every time I see these ugly faces, I'll kill them on sight. Then I can take their heads and feed them to the fish!"

King Rob and Owen both stiffened in shock. They didn't dare say anything more. After all, Odelia was practically a Holy Domain Warrior, and she was almost on par with a deity tier warrior. It was far too easy for someone on that level to kill the father and son duo.

After following the officials into the grand hall of the royal palace, I was then taken by the guards into the cold dungeons underground. Even so, my rank as the General of the South and the commander of the Royal Army had not been taken away. As such, I was probably just going to stand by to wait for a trial. Even when I passed by the jailers, they all looked at me with awe and respect. After all, I had been the first general that dared to lead troops against the Dragonling Army, not to mention someone who had gone on an expedition that journeyed deep into the Hybrid Demon territory. In Tian Ling City, I was practically a legend. This created an enigma for the jailers, because while they were impressed and in awe of my achievements, they were also worried and fearful of my strength.

I could finally cross something off my bucket list: "Ending up in jail". I

sat on the cold stone bed and couldn't help but laugh wryly at myself. I knew exactly why Owen felt so threatened by me.

Now that Theodore was dead, King Rob's only successor was Owen. As such, the only obstacle in his path was me, the commander of the Royal Army. It was simply because I did not show loyalty to anyone. Instead, I seemed to be leaning towards Pearl, and I had an enormous military strength. If he doesn't eliminate me, Owen probably won't be able to sleep at night.

Unfortunately, I never would've thought that Owen would stoop so low as to use these petty methods to deal with me. There was no chance I would let this pass by!

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"Ding!" The system notified me that tomorrow at 12, there was going to be a Rewards Event held at the palace. At that point, I'd be escorted out of jail to receive my judgment. Not bad, I can take this time and get some good rest.

When I logged off, I went out with Wan Er and Dong Cheng and ate a satisfying meal before heading off for some well-deserved rest.

By the time I finally logged back on, it was time for judgment.

Chapter 829: Expanding the Military

“Shua!”

I opened my eyes in the jail cell only to see a large black rat clinging to my chest. I picked it up by the tail and threw it to the opposite corner. I leaped to my feet and checked out my equipment. My armor was already getting close to breaking. There were dents and scuff marks caused by numerous battle axe and swords. “Bang!” The jail door cracked open. A guard outside shouted, “Commander Li, it's time to come out and head to the Grand Hall!”

I stretched out my arms. Feeling a little sore, I walked out of the jail cell. More likely than not, this was going to be the last time for me to see this jail cell.

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When I was finally above ground, we weaved through several rooms before we reached the Grand Hall. I quickened my pace and caught up with the guard to ask, “Sir, did anything happen yesterday?”

The guard bitterly smiled, “Nothing big happened, but quite a few small issues came up...”

“What?”

“The king’s beard... was completely shaved off overnight. The person who did it was incredibly skilled. He managed to pull the feat off without waking up the king. The blade that was used must have been the world’s sharpest weapon.”

I hid a smile, but the guard still caught a glance. Feeling a little disrespectful, I explained, “I never would’ve imagined that the palace would have a mythical person like that.”

The guard replied, “Hmph, this is clearly a message to the king that this mysterious thief can take the king’s life at any moment. It is too disgraceful.”

I already had a pretty good guess of who the culprit was. Besides Odelia,

who else would do something so daring and mischievous?

.....

When I walked through the Grand Hall, it was already noon. Wan Er, Fang Ge Que, Simple, Dong Cheng Yue, Ye Lai, and the top ten players of the empire were all present. Seeing the manacles around my bruised wrists, Ye La flared up, "D*mn, what's going on? Xiao Yao, who chained you up?"

I smiled, "No problem!"

When I walked up the steps to the throne, King Rob looked at me and coldly said, "After Pearl and Owen's investigation, the truth has come to light. Commander Li has nothing to do with the death of my son. Not only is he guiltless, he's actually shown quite a bit of merit. Men, unlock the cuffs for Commander Li!"

I shook my head and replied, "No need!"

As I said that, I channeled energy into my arms and roared. The special Chilly Steel that these cuffs were made of immediately shattered. I stared straight at the old king. Owen and the others were completely stupefied. They probably understood the message I was sending. So long as I wanted to leave, not even the world's strongest jail cell would be able to stop me.

.....

I went and stood by Pearl's side. She glanced at me and whispered, "Do you know why they let you off so easily?"

I shook my hand, "No, I don't..."

Pearl gave a slight smile and said, "A lot has happened in the past two days. Father's beard was shaved off overnight. Currently, it's suspected that your friends from Dragon City were the culprits. Besides... Long Xing, Xia Ye, and the other generals led the Royal Army in an act of defiance by gathering close to a hundred war ships on the War God's River. The display of power had threatened the Xia Yu Army all the way back to their ports. Han Yuan and Xiao Lie lined up a hundred Dragon Crystal Cannons and regular cannons about a thousand meters outside the city walls and

began training on the fields. None of the noblemen dared to come out...”

I was stunned. Never would I have imagined just how dedicated my troops would be. It was so heartfelt, but at the same time, my feelings were tampered by worry. Those actions could have overturned Tian Ling City. Besides, it would stir up King Rob and Owen. For high level men like them, there were thousands of methods to push around military men like me.

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Right then, King Rob stood up from the throne. I saw a white handkerchief tied around his arm. It was a sign of respect for the deceased Prince Theodore. As he looked across the room, he said, “This expedition decimated Luo Lin’s troops, furthermore eliminating Luo Lin and Gawain while dealing a critical blow to Ignaus. It has effectively pulled Tian Ling City out of the threatening presence of the Northern Hybrid Demons. Everyone present has contributed to this incredible achievement. Tell me what you would like as a reward!”

Fang Ge Que and Q-Sword both chose to promote their military ranks. It was different this time. Almost everyone put their rewards towards raising their ranks in some way. The only difference was that Wan Er and Dong Cheng were part of Dragon City—not to mention the fact that I was already in the military. As such, they decided on equipment and other rewards.

Dong Cheng ended up with a Demon Harvest Tier mage ring, and Wan Er received a Demon Harvest necklace. Both were pretty good.

King Rob leaned against his King’s Sword and made an announcement, “The Flame Dragon Army was the number one contributor in this expedition. My son, Theodore, died bravely in battle. As always, the Flame Dragon Army has tirelessly fought for the empire. Xu Yi will become its leader as the Commander of the Flame Dragon Army. Furthermore, Fang Ge Que will now be the Supervisor of the Archery Troop and will be promoted to become a major. Mu Xuan, Enchanted Painting, and Ye Lai will all become deputy supervisors and be promoted to lieutenants!”

As he said that, King Rob shuddered and said, “Drunken Spear will be

promoted to deputy general and will be in charge of ten thousand men from the Autumn Harvest Army. As before, the army will remain under the Xia Yu Army. Q-Sword will be promoted to lieutenant of the Flame Axe Foot Soldier Camp.”

Owen sat across from me with an intense glare. I smiled back.

King Rob continued, “Finally, Commander Li Xiao Yao of the Royal Army has shown great bravery and courage in this battle. He will be promoted to the Protector of the Empire, Tier 3 military rank. He will be permitted to expand his army to 100,000 men. Furthermore, generals Long Xing and Xia Ye who are under Li Xiao Yao will be promoted as the General of the East and the General of the South respectively, and will be transferred to the Xia Yu Army. Generals Xiao Lie and Han Yuan will be promoted to deputy generals and will be transferred to the Flame Dragon Army!”

I was stunned. What a malicious move. This must have been Owen’s suggestion. This way, he could take away my most capable generals. If I were the only leader of this army, I couldn’t possibly manage so many soldiers. This was clearly a hidden attack to cut off my right and left arms.

I took a step forward, “Your Majesty, this may not be appropriate.”

King Rob was stunned, “General Li, what is inappropriate?”

I thought about my answer before responding, “The Royal Army has only recently grown to be successful and is still in a phase which requires talented leaders. Han Yuan and the others are the most capable at handling such matters. Moreover, they’ve developed a relationship with the soldiers. In the military, trust is highly regarded. Only with these kinds of generals can I optimize the Royal Army’s strength. I’d rather give up all of my rewards to keep these four in the Royal Army!”

King Rob jumped to his feet, “Li Xiao Yao, are you saying that you’d rather have these four men and not the title as the Protector of the Empire?”

I nodded with a smile, “Yes, Your Majesty. Please grant my wish.”

“Alright then...”

King Rob let out a sigh and said, "All generals in the Royal Army will not be transferred and will remain in their former positions. I will allow you to recruit more people so that your army can handle the scale of 100,000 men."

"Thank you, Your Majesty!"

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I returned to my spot in line. Ye Lai smiled, "This world is just too shady.... They won't even give rewards and even the NPCs are shady. D*mn, I don't even know what else there is to say."

I smiled back, "It doesn't matter, one day there will be light in this world!"

"That's right!"

Afraid I wasn't happy, Wan Er stayed by my side after the meeting. I walked out with her and sent away Frost, Zi Shu, and Odelia. I went straight to the Royal Army to finish some tasks while Wan Er and Dong Cheng went to grind levels.

I mounted onto my horse and rode out of Tian Ling City. When I looked back, I saw that there were four heads on spikes before the Tian Ling City gates. One of them was fairly larger than the others. It was the Blood Giant Kehl's head. The other three were Luo Lin, Gawain, and Han Ling. This was like a slap to the Hybrid Demon, displaying the all powerful Hybrid Demon King heads there. If Lanais, Da Lun, Xi Fu or any one of the other Demon Kings were to see this sight, they would probably be pissed. Would there be a day in which King Rob and Owen's heads would be on spikes on the Hybrid Demon walls?

When I arrived at the camp, Han Yuan and Xiao Lie were beyond happy to see me back. They soon pulled me into the central tent for a strategy meeting regarding the status of the different factions in the army. I took the opportunity to tell them what happened during the reward ceremony

Han Yuan furrowed his brow and said, "I originally thought that I'd receive some kind of reward. Who would've thought that this time, the

king had no intentions of rewarding the Royal Army at all. Looks like he's really going senile."

I smiled, "No worries, Deputy General Song can take some gold from our treasury to reward our soldiers. While the king might have disappointed our hopes, we can't do the same to our men."

Long Xing smiled, "The commander's right!"

Xia Ye asked, "My lord, His Majesty allowed us to recruit enough people for a 100,000 man army?"

I replied, "That's right. The only problem is that I haven't thought of where we can find that many men."

Han Yuan said, "My lord, do you know why the Royal Army's battle power is on par, and sometimes even higher than that of Flame Dragon Army and the Xia Yu Army?"

"I don't, why is that?"

"Because our Blade and Shield Army has the undefeatable Barbarian strength!" Han Yuan laughed, "However, after the continuous battles, our 5,000 man Barbarian division has now been cut down to 4,000. We cannot continue on like this. I have a suggestion. How about we gather some men and head out to the southeast region of Ba Huang City to recruit some men from the Barbarian tribes?"

Long Xing clapped his hands, "The Barbarians live impoverished lives. If we give them gold and food, then almost all of the Barbarians would sign up to join. I'm sure we'll be able to recruit many strong foot soldiers. General Han Yuan, great suggestion!"

Xiao Lie was much more reserved and cautioned, "I still have a few worries. The Barbarians are harder to order around. How do we tame their wild spirits?"

I responded, "There's a piece of land just south of the Moon Blade Forest called the Flame Crystal Valley. We can start developing that land into fields. I'll make a request and we can move the entire Barbarian Tribe to that area. Not only are the lands fertile for harvest, but it can help them

develop a sense of loyalty to the nation. Then we wouldn't have to worry about them rebelling."

Joy lit up in Xiao Lie's eyes, "Genius move, my lord. That's exactly what we'll do!"

"Good!"

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My request went through smoothly. Princess Pearl easily got the authority over the Flame Crystal Valley land. The Royal Army sent out a 20,000 man troop to begin clearing the area. The other four generals and I led a 10,000 man team to escort several carts of rations and gold to the south eastern region of Ba Huang City.

Credits

Translator: [Gravity Tales](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)